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MEMOIRS

OF

A MANAGER;

OR,

Life's Stage with New Scenery;

BRIEFLY SKETCHED

BY HENRY LEE,

AUTHOR OF

"Caleb Quotem"—"Echoism" (a Poem) "Gay's Chair," &c.

VOL. I.

TAUNTON:

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Dedicatory Address.

WERE *I* a *Poet* like *Moore*, a *Dramatist* like *Colman*, a *Novelist or Historian*, like *Sir Walter Scott*, and could I confer either fame, respect, or honor; I should, on the present occasion, be ready to inscribe these Pages to a Gentleman, from whom I have frequently received very flattering marks of kind attention, and the most signal proofs of liberal regard. But to speak here in his praise, would only be echoing the public voice, and might run the chance of displeasing him; for his prime wish is, to do good without having it talked about. I shall, therefore, forbear even the mention of his *name*, and solicit him only to honor this work by his perusal, and to bestow on it that degree of patronage, which he, and the Public, may indulgently think it entitled to.

HENRY LEE.

Preface.

THE following Memoirs, made up of anecdotes, scraps, and sketches, are in themselves a type of the Author's career. He has known no regularity;---his journey has been, like the comet's—eccentric. To-day here—to-morrow there; hurrying from place to place, ever mingling in new society, and finding fresh faces, it may be expected that a great diversity of character and much interesting adventure, must have been presented to his observation. These the Author flatters himself he has not been slow to note "in the volume of his brain," although he did not trouble himself to commit them to diaries or memoranda. He must however, confess that in consequence of having neglected them at the moment of their occurrence, he has been compelled, in their arrangement, to neglect the order of time, and indeed, all order; for in looking back upon the panorama of his past life, he finds it difficult to distinguish distances and measure perspective; nor will this seem wonderful when he searches

his own memory, and reflects how much more fleetly some portions of his career seem to pass than others, and how differently certain things and persons are imprinted in his recollection. These two volumes contain the reminiscences of half a century, past in the most various of all existences, that of the stage. They record anecdotes of beings, once celebrated, now perhaps scarcely remembered but by the few of their day that still survive. If at times he has been trifling or prosaic—the Author trusts that the reader will forgive that which is the accompaniment of his years. It is the legacy of an old man who has grown grey in the service of the public, and if it can afford entertainment but for a single hour, he will be content. The task might certainly have been more ably performed, but he has striven to the best of his ability, and he trusts that the excellencies of others may not be deemed an unpardonable fault in him. This, in all human probability, will be his last address to a public whom he has so many times before addressed with tongue and pen; he hastens, therefore, ere the curtain falls before him, to return them his grateful thanks for the favor and applause with which they have so often, and so highly distinguished him.

CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

Introduction—Christenings—Authors and Almanack makers—Missionaries—Witchcraft—Locke—Learning—First Play—A German Sage—American Trade—Moore's Almanacks—Poor Robin 1

CHAPTER II.

Domestic Habits—Papers, &c.—Romantic Thoughts—Sherwood Forest—Bunny Wrestling—Lord Rancliff—Cobbett—Duke of Wellington—Circle of Fame—Note Book—Daily Habits—Hunting—Coursing—Dignum (the Singer) on Horse-back—London—Theatre—Lewis, Kemble—Mrs. Siddons, Synagogue—Braham, Royalty Theatre 44

CHAPTER III.

Rambling—Newport—Poetry—Huntington—Bedford—Oxford—Bath—Bristol—Clifton—Sea Voyage—Guernsey—Jersey—French Coast—Alarm—Prince de Bouillon, &c.—Dutchess of Manchester—Head Quarters—The Commissaire—Prison Scene—Making Love, &c. 79

CHAPTER IV.

Oxford—Brush Collins—Devizes, Wiltshire—Mr. Perry (of the Morning Chronicle)—False alarm—Aylesbury—Brighton—Salisbury—Dorchester—Charles Murray—Biggs—Curious applications—Stage-struck Heroes—Taunton Theatre, &c.—Weymouth—Gloucester House—Princesses—Guernsey—The Governor—Easy way of getting married, &c.—Mr. Harris—Mr. Lewis—Mr. Kemble—Mr. Macready—Alderney—Lyme Ilfracombe—Tenby in Wales—Lord Henry Petty—Lord Holland—Plymouth—Mr. Cooke, &c. 120

MEMOIRS

OF A

MANAGER.

CHAP. I.

My early days.—Ancient and Modern Christenings.—First play.—Practical Jokes.—Almanacks and Almanack makers.—Mr. White Author of the Ephemeris,—Mr. Pearson, of Moore and Poor Robin.—Ladies' and Gentlemens' Diaries,—Rev. C. Wildbore.—Dubois the Comedian of Sadlers' Wells,—O' Keefe,—Peter Pindar,—and Doctor Graham.

LET any man take up his pen with the intention of writing the history, or even a mere sketch, of his own life, he will presently find himself in a kind of dilemma, or labyrinth, without clue or guide to conduct him through the windings, intricacies and numerous difficulties, that immediately present themselves to his view!—However proficient and expert he may be in all the minor qualities and capabilities required for such a task, in having at command an easy and fe-

licitous flow of expression, a happy tact in the necessary formation and equally necessary combination of well-chosen words, fit phrases, and all the technical requisites for plain diction, or the more pure and polished periods of elaborate elocution;—however vivid his recollection of past events and their relative circumstances;—however crowded and richly stored the warehouse of his memory—yet, notwithstanding all this, when he casts his mind's eye over the mass of materials before him, he will find, from the confused state in which they lie, without order or arrangement, that they serve rather to impede than to assist him in the business he has undertaken. Consequently it will be his principal task to make a proper selection, and duly exercise his judgment, in relating only what is worthy of being known, either as matter of fact, utility, or amusement. The danger in most cases, is rather that one may say too much, than too little: perhaps the middle path will be the safest to pursue, in order to please the many different tastes and opinions of the generality of readers. Besides, there may possibly be as much wisdom displayed in suppressing some circumstances, as there would be wit in relating them. It is allowed to be so in poetry, then why not in prose, and in writings of every description? Pope has told us, that, with regard to verse,

> "Poets lose half the praise they would have got
> Were it but known what they discreetly blot!"

Now the author of the following rambling notes must claim the negative merit of having blotted much, yet still preserved a strict adherence to the cause of truth

wherever it can be serviceable, and an occasional indulgence of the fancy, where it can be exercised without any ill consequences.

In the path intended to be pursued, nothing shall be stated as fact, but such as really is so; but in topics of any other kind, a little recourse will be had to fancy, in order to awaken the attention of every reader who may daign to glance at these inaccurate and rambling observations.

It should be premised that these pages are written under circumstances somewhat provoking; the author being from home and having with him but few of his wanted books, documents and memorandums, in a certain degree necessary to assist his memory and reveal to him the images and pleasing associations of his younger days.

Authors, in general, and the whole fraternity of critics, from Longinus of ancient times, to the Annual, Quarterly, Monthly, and Diurnal Scribes of the present hour, have laid it down as an established rule and well founded axiom, that every poetic composition that aspires to the honor of being considered an Epic, should have the necessary requisites for such a work; —viz: a beginning, a middle, and an end!— A common understanding may not, perhaps, perceive any difficulty in this. For my own part, I should humbly conceive that an Epic Poem, however short,—nay, only of ten thousand lines!!—I should (with all possible deference to better judgments) venture to surmise that the first line was the actual beginning; the

two thousand five hundredth couplet about the middle; and that the nine thousand nine hundred and ninety ninth line was very near the end!!—This is what a man of a simple way of thinking would naturally affirm; but poets have not only the figures of poetry at their command, but have also a kind of poetical arithmetic of their own, which produces very different results from the calculations that generally proceed from the plain prosaic understandings of common men.

Since the foregoing maxims were broached with regard to poems, similar ones have been uttered respecting all other kinds of writing; of poets themselves and of authors in general and more especially of those who write any thing of an historical nature, be it only the history of their own lives! They are expected to *begin with the beginning, and end with the end!* All authors, like other culprits, say the oracles, ought to give a satisfactory story, a right and true account of their "birth, parentage, character, and education," if not of their "unfortunate career, and its fatal termination!!" This, however, is a matter of taste, and may be pardonably omitted.

Now it happens rather unluckily for the present purpose, that having promised to offer simple records of real events, to state plain facts in as plain a manner as possible, and to depend on my own personal knowledge for the truth of my statements:—now it happens somewhat unfortunately that the first fact necessary to be spoken of, should be one that I absolutely know nothing at all about!—I mean the certain time of my birth! On this point, I must, like all other men,

be satisfied with *hearsay* evidence only. I was told, while a boy, that I was born on the twenty-seventh of October 1765; and I have never since that period had any reason to doubt the truth of the information. On the contrary, the event itself, the house, the very room and other matters have been pointed out to me with a degree of precision that is as certain, and ten times more explicitly descriptive of such events, than a Parish Register!

The person to whom I allude, and on whose authority the above circumstances are stated, is one of my oldest friends, Mr. George Baxter, and therefore he is thus selected to stand foremost in the motley pages of these memoirs. This gentleman is well known in the county of Nottingham, as a very intelligent, industrious, well-informed character: somewhat singular in his habits and manners, but as obliging as he is entertaining, social and agreeable, and at all times and on all occasions extremely communicative and moreover universally respected. But to proceed.—It is sometimes rather difficult to trace back to their original source, the first cause or causes of our principal errors and most prominent transgressions. If the first knowledge and real love of Letters be a fault, it ought to be attributed to the persons who were most instrumental in pointing out to me the flowery pathways that first led me astray, of which some account shall presently be given. If there was any crime in forming an attachment for the Drama and ultimately embracing the Stage as a profession, that crime must, in a certain degree, be shared amongst my friends, whose plaudits encouraged me

and of whom more will be said in due season:—but as to the sin of scribbling, if indeed there be any thing criminal attached to it, it may with truth be said, that it arose from my keeping bad company;—viz: the friends alluded to, whose seductive allurements led me into it before I was aware of the consequences. But, as far as regards this sin of scribbling, and a most flagrant sin it has been at times considered, if any one person more than another has been the cause of my being thus led astray, it is this very friend of mine, this before-named Mr. Baxter, whose conscientious reflections may perhaps point out to him the truth of these assertions, the magnitude of the mischief he has committed, and the heavy load of crime which was thus laid upon me! Feeling this as he ought to do, I trust he will not scruple to make me all the amends in his power, and, by way of atonement, that he will as my proxy, readily and regularly perform the act of penance in my behalf! Yes, as he lives near the parish church and is in truth a regular good church-going man, I hope he will, as soon as convenient, oblige me by charitably stepping forward in my behalf and doing the act of penance in a white sheet! I mean not that he should catch a cold by standing bare-footed on the damp stones of the church floor, clad in the penitential garb, but that in a sheet of white paper he should make that confession and atonement which he has it in his power so well to discharge; and that he afterwards send me the said sheet, as a proof of the ritual having been duly and properly performed! Whenever he is disposed to go through

this formal yet necessary discipline, (the actual ceremony of this white-paper penance), he may consider himself as completely exonerated, and free of all the Penalties attached to the scribbling sins by me committed as well as of those I may hereafter commit; and that by so acting he will do me ample justice, and make me all the atonement that can be reasonably expected or required!!

As far as respects my other faults, particularly my dramatic propensities, and still further, my theatrical mal-practices and the long and lasting consequences that have followed—they will be pointed out and better ascertained by the perusal of these desultory pages and the observations attached to them. But, for the present, I will again return to the place and time of my birth, which, having been already spoken of, the next point to be considered is the ceremony of my christening. A godfather was soon found for me, at the next door. An independent gentleman of the name of BROOKS undertook this somewhat important charge, and he fulfilled the trust reposed in him, in a way that pleased my parents and afterwards gave me complete satisfaction, for every year he used to make me a handsome present.

I have often thought that there is a something very pleasing and most conscienciously comfortable in a good christening, that is, in such a hearty old fashioned christening as mine was. Not like your half and half things of the present day, or the cold hearted, fashionable parties of *tea and turn out!* No; on the contrary, there was, in those times, every thing that could

be thought of to promote the welfare, comfort and happiness of those present! There used to be something good in all that was provided, to correspond with the good intent of the purpose for which they had been assembled! There was an abundance of good things!—good company, good friends, (real friends); good fare, plenty of good liquor, good cheer of all kinds, and at all times a good hearty welcome. These ceremonies now-a-days are too often conducted in quite a different manner; and sometimes on a plan so plain, so sparing and parsimonious, that they may be urged as probable reasons why we have so many bad Christians, and why we experience such a wonderful falling off in acts of true Christianity!—We all know that practice is more powerful than precept, and that hospitality is one of the duties of our creed: it cannot therefore be too often, or too sensibly impressed on the minds of all who assist in the serious ceremony of baptism, that the first and most essential rites of hospitality and good fellowship should never, on such occasions, be neglected. Nay, it is advisable, not only that plenty should abound, but that the best articles of all kinds which can possibly be procured, should, on such occasions, be always produced and unsparingly distributed. Another point is to be particularly noticed, as descriptive of the change of circumstances with the change of times! As in all matters of ceremony our ancestors were very particular, they were remarkably so in ceremonies of this nature: they were studious to display their zeal by a strict attention to forms, as well as by showing the most scru-

pulous regard to the articles made use of in their common, as well as their most sacred institutions. With them every custom, almost every word, had at least two meanings, sometimes half a dozen. It was first to be considered according to its most obvious and common acceptation; and at other times to be taken as expressive of all the metaphorical and symbolical combinations, that faith, time, or custom, had attached to the said practices: even the very same things and objects frequently bore a different name, as well as a different meaning, when applied to different purposes. Common articles of food or furniture changed their appellations with the change of circumstances! thus bread became wafer, and a cup a chalice; water became the symbol of weakness and strong liquors denoted strength of mind and resolute courage. In matters of faith, too, these considerations had their full weight: it sometimes seemed as if the very sound were thought an "echo to the sense!" as if strength of faith were best portrayed by the potency of the emblem.

Nor were our fathers singular in this idea. It has been diffused throughout the world. So thought the regenerated Indian;—but perhaps my readers never heard of this worthy gentleman. Let them then take the story as I have heard it.

One of our English Missionaries, industriously labouring in his vocation on the borders of CHINA, had conscientiously converted one of the natives, and had administered to him a little tent wine, the emble-

matical ritual of the true faith. The zealous missionary asked the pious convert what he thought of the excellent doctrine that had just been administered to him, "Oh, very good" (replied the honest, simple native) very good indeed! very excellent doctrine! I like it much! it gives me great comfort! I feel quite happy!" but (after licking his lips) he added "I tink, though very good, I tink I should have liked it more if it had been brandy!!" Now this reply was in my opinion, a very natural one; very innocent, conclusive, and consistent. How should a poor simple native of INDIA, knowing but little of the English language,—how could he possibly have given a better answer to the question put to him? The missionary had long been talking with him of heavenly affairs and spiritual matters; of the weakness of human nature and the strength of faith; of good spirits and of bad spirits. The honest native Indian knew not that words had double and even, at times, triple meanings. He understood words and things only according to their literal, or most obvious sense. He was not one of your puny punsters, or witling, whiffle-gig, word-snappers! He made use of no metaphors, nor bandied about the bye-words of *badinage*: his method of expressing himself was plain and simple! He used the terms that came first to his aid and which he thought the best calculated to express his feelings. He was active in mind, most able in limb, and truly powerful in resolution. How could he then better elucidate his aptitude for power, and intensity of feeling,—of just and accurate feeling,

otherwise than by calling to his assistance that cogent coadjutor, and most determined determinator of all subtle and refractory spirits—brandy!!

I will now proceed, or rather return, to my regular narrative.

Being christened, I was of course somewhat raised in the scale of society; I mean according to the estimation and most accredited and best received opinions of all good men; but I really knew very little or nothing of my own advancement, till three or four years afterwards, when I became old enough to relish the taste of a large plum-bun, given me by one of my godfathers, Mr. Brooks, already spoken of. This gentleman, a good-humoured, liberal man, was something more than a mere nominal sponsor and promoter of the duties of Christianity; he kindly took care to remind me, every Christmas, of the holiness of the festival, by sending me what in that part of the country is generally called a "Yule bun." This was a huge plum cake whose weight was every year apportioned to my increasing size and strength, being just what I could contrive to carry.

From this time I began to conceive highly of matters like these, and felt that christenings, god-fathers and plum-buns, were great blessings, and most excellent, most righteous things.

The first school to which I was sent was kept by a most respectable old lady, one Dame Jessop. She was a kind hearted woman, but being old, somewhat wrinkled, and a good deal wiser than many of her neighbours, she was consequently supposed by

many to have the power of witchcraft. A simple neighbour of her's, one Sally Hart, who kept a shop in the same street, had been for some weeks indisposed; and, at a loss to account for it, her sagacious friends or acquaintance, (equally wise,) raised a report that her illness was caused by the wicked influence of some old witch; accordingly the usual safeguards were provided; a horse-shoe nailed on the threshhold of the door; and several other forms and ceremonies observed, which were thought prudent, nay, in a certain degree necessary, on all such occasions. At that time the common people were always on the alert to look out for and believe stories of a marvellous or supernatural tendency; then, when any person was supposed to be suffering under the influence of witchery, they did not seek far for the cause of it. Dame Jessop living in the same street was one of the first suspected, and, on hearing of it, she went immediately to the shop of the said Sally Hart, and spoke to the following effect: "I come to have a little conversation with you, on a subject wherein my name has been mentioned; but, you perceive, I come without a broomstick, and have dared to cross the horse-shoe on the threshhold of your door; do you believe the ridiculous reports that have been raised against me?"—Sally Hart immediately replied that she did not credit them; but confessed that many of her neighbours had often spoken to her on the subject, but she did not listen to such idle stories.

"I am glad" said the old Dame, to find that you have the good sense not to believe in such folly;

tell your idle gossipping neighbours, that instead of talking of me they had better think of the duties they owe to *themselves* and their *families:* otherwise, tho' I am no witch, I can easily foretel that they who circulate such tales will prove in the end as weak and worthless as they are at present ridiculous:" so saying, the good old Dame re-crossed the horse-shoe and tottered home.

On my first going to the school of this respectable old Dame, she put a horn-book into my hands, and I, by chance, caught a glance at her ferrula.

I did not know the use of either, but, as the book was the prettiest, it pleased me most; nay, I soon began to dislike the ferrula, and discovered that my school-fellows were much of the same opinion: wishing to be a good boy, and being often told I really was one, I thought the ferrula, as well as the rod, quite superfluous, and, as far as regarded myself, absolutely unnecessary. They were both generally to be seen lying on a shelf, close by the side of the old dame; and whenever I or my companions were inclined to play and laugh, instead of looking at our books, if we happened to cast our eyes towards the old dame or her shelf, we were in an instant awed into silence, and our eyes if not our thoughts again turned to the books before us resuming our tasks with apparent diligence, a silent composure of demeanour and all possible tokens of profound respect. The said horn-book had some little painted ornament or gilt finery about it. The book struck my fancy, and at the end of the week permission was given to take it home with me, to look over the contents during my holiday. I was

thought a good boy for doing so, and studious to display my acquirements, I showed my new book to the whole family.

The next day, looking at my lesson, it was pointed out to me by my mother, that the letter C stood for cake and P for plum-pudding; and, lo! (by way of practical illustration) at dinner time they both appeared on the table. This certainly was a most happy elucidation of the meaning of letters, and of their real worth and great utility. All the deep-learned, big-wigged pedants in Christendom, could never have devised a more simple method of teaching the alphabet than this;—great A and big-bellied B, are pretty readily impressed on the minds of youth; but C is a stumbling-block, till the tyro is taught that C stands for cake and for cherries, and P for pies, for plums and for pudding. The great difficulties are then soon got over, soon swallowed, almost as soon as the articles that serve to implant them in the memory: and with excellent reason too! The proverb says "pudding's good to settle love!" and why not equally good in settling literature as well as love?—I have great reason to think that my prevailing taste for letters, was established in the manner here stated. Many scribblers would be ashamed to give so humble an origin to their acquired tastes and inclinations. Many writers, to account for their literary propensities, might perhaps say that they were highly elevated by Homer: pleased with Pindar; charmed very much by Virgil; in love with Ovid; and so on through the whole range of Greek and Latin mythology. Then again

descending to English, they might state that they had mounted with Milton; soared with Shakespeare; were delighted with Dryden, and most wonderfully pleased with Pope; and so run on in a long line of alliteration till they sunk down at last,—an immeasurable distance!—to the poetasters and prolific scribblers of the present day. Thus, as before observed, thus many writers who aim at or assume dignity, might possibly pretend to account for their first love of learning. But notions of dignity are here laid aside or kept in view only so far as a wish to avoid faults of a contrary nature, and of more importance.

My first love of Letters is thus sufficiently explained, a passion as strong as the love of life, and it will probably be as lasting; for, without the enjoyment generally derived from books, life itself would not be very desirable, or at all events would not with me be an object of much solicitude.

> As mother's milk may lead the way to drinking;
> So pudding settles love, and sets us thinking.

Such are my ideas as to the first impressions! But whether any of our ideas are, or are not, innate, let philosophers like Locke discover if they can, and if they please most amply discuss. It was maintained by that learned man (as well as original thinker) that all the ideas we possess are acquired by time and experience. This at first might seem a very simple matter; but Locke had many powerful opponents, and he was (though brought up amongst the most learned of his day), obliged to write two tolerably large

volumes, before he could convince the world of the soundness of his doctrine. Nay, there are some that even still dispute it; but their authority is now of little weight: their arguments are deemed so very futile and ill-founded, as scarcely to deserve mention or notice. Be it known then(for except amongst thinking people it is not generally known), that this single point about innate ideas, (Locke maintaining the negative) caused one of the greatest changes that ever stirred or affected the general interests of mankind, and eventually will never perhaps cease to operate, till the whole of the systems, laws and institutions of the civilized world are formed and finally fixed on a different basis.

Locke told his readers that a blind man could not be made to understand any thing about colors, nor a deaf man of sounds. He inquired of the latter what was his idea of sound? The deaf man could not give any rational answer. The same question was put to the other person and a proper reply was given. But when this blind man was asked his idea of scarlet, he paused, and inquired whether it was any thing he could hear? The reply, of course was, no. Any thing that he could feel? The answer given him was that he might lay his hand upon it, but they thought that color could not be ascertained by feeling alone, as that depended on the differences of the surfaces on which the said color was laid. For instance, the color called scarlet placed or painted on a piece of rough or smooth board, or on any hard substance, would excite a very different sensation from a piece of cloth, though

both of the same color. The question was repeated, in order to ascertain whether or not he could form any notion of what was meant by scarlet. It was, however, told him that scarlet was one of the brightest and most showy of all colors, and that the question was put to him merely to know his opinion of the word; wishing him to declare what he thought scarlet meant, or what it was like? "Like" said this blind man (after pausing a short time), "Like! I think it must be like the sound of a trumpet!" This answer was as good a one, and as consistent as could possibly be expected, considering that the poor man was not possessed of the sense of sight—the only sense that could qualify him to judge of colors. Being blind from his infancy, how could he form any distinct notions of things not within the scope of his knowledge? Of colors he absolutely knew nothing. As well might a man be supposed capable of describing a country he had never seen or heard of. And yet matters as gross and as improbable as this, we often hear and frequently read of:—nay, we many times witness such improprieties without being aware of them! Now to explain this assertion, suppose, when wishing to describe a fine woman, we say "she is as beautiful as an angel!" Perhaps the reader does not yet see any impropriety in the expression; but surely it is somewhat strange (we will not say wrong) but very strange, when describing an object that may be seen every day, thus to compare it to an object never seen by either of the parties speaking of it.

Perhaps a part of the impropriety may be perceived

by reversing the order of the objects compared; thus —"An Angel is as beautiful as a superlatively fine woman!" Now here the simile is perfect; the object not seen is compared to one we have knowledge of; and probably very often see. In some cases similes of this kind are excusable; nay, they may be admired as enhancing the value of the poetry: Shakespeare abounds with comparisons of this sort; Hamlet, even when he is philosophizing, says "What a piece of work is man!—In action how like an angel!" and other things of the same kind are spoken of by this philosopher.*

It may also be mentioned, that similar phrases have often been used by lovers and love-sick poets, without any body thinking of the *blunders* thus committed! To be sure poets and lovers have a kind of *general licence* to say whatever they please; they have each of them their proper characters to maintain. Common sense, would be common place; therefore the inventive faculties must be exercised; the lover should be something less than common sense,—the poet, something above it. In fact, a true doting lover is out of character when he acts like a sensible man; therefore improprieties in language are quite natural, and as necessary as blunders to an Irishman. By the bye, let us produce as an

*It should be said—"By this *poetic* philosopher!"—for who, (except *poetic philosophers*) ever *saw* or talked of the *action* of ANGELS? If we except only the scholiasts of the dark ages who expended their lives in the discussion of such questions as these. How many angels can stand on the point of a needle? Can an angel exist *in vacuo*? and, supposing it possible, would the vacuum be perfect? Can more than one angel exist in the same physical point at one and the same moment? &c, &c.

instance, Romeo; let us notice a trait of character (in other words a beauty!) which has hitherto escaped the most acute critics, that ever smelt out the numerous beauties of Shakespeare. It is here introduced to establish the reasoning above stated—that lovers may say almost any thing they like,—any thing, however improbable, and be still in character.

This celebrated character falls in love with two different ladies in the course of a few hours. Then again he loved where it might be expected he would have rejected the object! He leaves Rosalind, whose family had nothing to say of him but what is in his favour, and he runs half crazy for Juliet, whose father and friends detest even his very name. "What's in a name? a rose by any other name would be as sweet." Was not this a hair-brained proceeding? The old Friar observes "Holy Saint Francis, what a change is this?" and well might he say so; and yet all such changes are natural in a lover.

As to the quickness of the change, sagacious critics may say that it is, on that account, a greater beauty, and in every respect worthy of Shakespeare; and is one of those manifold proofs of his being a most profound judge of human nature.

It is maintained that men, like Romeo, of the most ardent tempers and complexions, whose inflammable spirits soonest take fire and burn the fiercest; they of all men, it is said, are most apt to change the objects of their adoration! In other words, that your most ardent lovers are the most fickle and least to be depended on. Besides the authority of Shakspeare and his critics, long experience will serve to convince

every candid man of the truth of this remark. But, though mere matter of fact, it is, perhaps, a lamentable truth to acknowledge. What will the ladies say on the subject? How will they make their choice? Where give their preference? To ardent love and inconstancy, or simple love and lasting affection? With one or the other they must be content, for without some alloy the banquet is not to be expected: so says experience. Ladies take your choice.

Yet, if advice on such a subject can be listened to, if ladies can be content with honest, every-day love, they will do well to take a few hints from these pages; they will reduce their hopes and expectations within the bounds of practical rule and positive fact. They will no longer look for that glaring, holiday kind of admiration, which is as apt to change, as the weather on a windy day: 'tis now sunshine, anon passing clouds shadow the whole face of the horizon: in short, all is uncertainty; nothing to be relied upon.

By way of explanation, a few more remarks may be hazarded on the character of Romeo. From the hastiness and violence of his love, a heedless critic might pronounce him to be an Irishman: love has been long considered the national and regular trade of Irishmen; and making love is as natural to them as the brogue, or the making of blunders. Now Romeo is rich both in the first and last of these qualifications.

Only hear him in the garden scene where he exclaims—

"She speaks, yet she says nothing!" Now is not this good Irish? He then observes "Her eye discourses, I will answer it!" and immediately this poor, brain-sick, love-lorn, sighing swain, begins to discourse with Juliet's eye: (though it must be admitted 'tis only by moonlight, and so dark he can scarcely see her eye!) no matter; a critic, if from the isle of Saint Patrick, or from the neighbourhood of Saint Giles's, might say, by way of a joke and with the true brogue, that Romeo's discourse was "all my eye!" such a phrase might be thought vulgar wit: but, whether so or not, we will change this amatory subject for one of a graver sort. The same author (Shakespeare) tells us that "Love is merely a madness, and sometimes deserves a horsewhip."

I very well remember the first theatrical performance I was taken to witness. The play announced in the bills was "*Love in a Village.*" I could not conceive what a play was, and I could neither eat nor sleep, so great was my expectation of the treat that I was to receive. At length the long desired evening came,—the company delighted me—I was lost in astonishment at the various divisions of boxes, pit and gallery;—when the curtain rose, the scenery called forth an exclamation of surprise—the whole drama seemed to me a real spectacle—I sympathized with the lovers and laughed with the happy swains—until I almost deemed the whole the work of enchantment. But an incident occurred there which has served to imprint it more deeply on my memory, and which, from its ludicrous nature, may be worth recording.

The performances of that night were particularly patronized by a Mr. Bradshaw, a gentleman of as much popularity as any in the town. This gentleman had written a few speeches on some local circumstances that had then recently occurred, which he gave to the actors, and the persons to whom these speeches alluded were invited by Mr. Bradshaw, and by him seated in a very conspicuous situation near the stage doors; the motives for so doing will presently appear. One of the persons so seated was a Mr. Eden, the landlord of the White Horse Inn.

This gentleman was, in many respects, an eccentric character; he frequently administered charms for the cure of the ague, the tooth ache and other maladies: but was most talked of for having hoarded up and kept in his possession, for several years, a considerable quantity of "Three-Pound-Twelves!" a species of coin well known at that time and greatly admired.

Those valuable pieces of coin Mr. Eden, in his merry moments, often boasted of, and sometimes exhibited to his friends and customers. Some of his waggish companions, by way of joke, once obtained possession of these favourite and valuable pieces! The old gentleman's alarm may be imagined! Having tormented him for several days, the coins were replaced, and he was pacified, resolving within himself to be more careful of them in future. It was reported that he once concealed them amongst some sand, stones and other rubbish, contained in an old box that served as a weight to the cook's roasting jack! These incidents were neatly alluded to by the pen of Mr. Bradshaw and introduced

into the play on that particular evening, in the scene where there is a Statute Fair held for the hiring of servants. The new written scene opened with the Justice complaining of the carelessness of his domestics, and the improper conduct, idle pranks and most provoking propensities of his whole family: a countryman briefly announced that the people out of doors were all in a state of alarm, on account of a robbery that had just been committed at a public-house in the market-place.

Here a servant came in, as if frightened out of her wits, saying that the thief had escaped in disguise: he was rather a young man, with hair of a carotty color, and some thought he had made his way through the crowd and skulked into the play-house: she desired all to take care of themselves and their pockets; she then went off, peeping about as if in search of the robber. Justice Woodcock now pretended to be dreadfully alarmed, when the same man who had previously sung the song of "Gee ho, Dobbin!" ran in from the stairs, and called another countryman aside, and slyly told him, that if he would help him in the concealment, he should go halves in the booty of which he had just luckily obtained possession. He then stated that he had been at the Inn, called the White Horse, and understanding that the landlord was from home, he had stolen his Three Pound Twelves! and here they are!! In saying this, he produced a large yellow canvas purse, which he shook and rattled, as if full of money: Mr. Eden immediately jumped from his seat, caught the fellow by the collar, and called aloud for constables

to assist him to apprehend the villain who had robbed him ! who had clandestinely plundered his house of the treasure he valued more than life! He then shook the supposed thief and raved like a madman. (The audience laughed); "Ay, ay" (he cried) "you may be merry if you like, but not at my expense; it is no laughing matter for me; I insist on having my money again, or I'll tear this rascal to pieces. He then again shook the actor till the beholders were obliged to interfere in his behalf. The old gentleman could not be pacified. He would make oath that the property was his, and he would have it in spite of all who were unfeeling enough to make a jest of his misfortunes. He was told that it was not a proper time or place to speak of the matter; it ought to be more regularly and thoroughly investigated, before proper persons. That they had a reliance on his character, as an honorable fair-dealing man, and, to satisfy his impatient suspicions, the purse and its contents should be safely sealed up in his presence, and he might leave it in the hands of the constables, or even take it home with him, and let the business be settled the next day. This arrangement completely restored the old gentleman to his wonted good humour, and he went home with his supposed treasure under his arm. This scene as may easily be imagined elicited great applause and incessant roars of laughter! When Mr. Eden reached home, his surprise, his astonishment may be conceived, it cannot be expressed.

He found his property safe where he had left it, and the whole affair a Joke, a mere trick that these wags

had played upon him. Well-pleased to find his beloved money in a place of safety, yet somewhat chagrined at having been so made a laughing stock, he ventured not to return to the theatre, but consoled himself as well as he could with an extra glass of his favorite beverage, went to bed and slept till the next morning.

This story stopped not hastily; it became the subject of many a mirthful evening, and will never cease to be talked of as long as any of the parties concerned remain alive. A few words more concerning the theatre. It is not improbable that the events here mentioned might have first sowed the seeds of my future love of theatrical pursuits! I still retain a slight remembrance of one of the performers in that company. His name was Clayton: more than twenty years afterwards, a daughter of his (Mrs. Pine) was a member of my company, at Salisbury, Dorchester, and other places.

I must now proceed or rather return to my school history. Having left my good old dame, I was sent to the best seminary in the town or neighbourhood, called the Church School. The master of it, Mr. Daniel Stafford, was a very clever, worthy man. He and his son, Mr. John Stafford (still alive), not only conducted their school, but had the chief management of the almanacks, the property of the Stationers' Company in London. This first turned my attention to almanacks and many things that concerned them.

Mr. White, too, the author of the celebrated nautical almanack called "The Ephemeris; or Celestial Atlas," resided at Bingham.

I saw this very clever and most intelligent man carried to his grave. I was extremely young at the time, but some particular circumstances attending his funeral were strongly impressed on my mind; owing to a difficulty of some kind which was experienced in taking his corpse out of the house, a *window-frame* was removed and the *coffin* conveyed through an aperture in the wall. About this time, too, I remember an old gentleman, one Doctor Collier, who showed me some large folio volumes of the works of Homer and Virgil: the plates of the heathen Gods and Goddesses awakened my attention and made me anxious to be better acquainted with them. A few years afterwards the opportunity offered itself, for I saw these very books when they became the property of a relation of the Doctor's at Normanton.

Books having thus fallen in my way, and being previously somewhat acquainted with almanacks, I began to scribble enigmas, &c. Some of them were shown to a friend who sent them to "The Ladies and Gentlemen's Diaries," &c. Many of the trifles thus sent were inserted, and I often received complimentary notices from the Editors and their various contributors.

At that time the chief management of "The Gentleman's Diary" was intrusted to the Rev. Charles Wildbore, whose talents as a mathematician were universally acknowledged, for, as such, few, if any, ever excelled him. I once saw him returning homeward from Nottingham and I felt a degree of respect for him that I cannot well describe. He had recently preached a

sermon at this Town when almost all the charity children were collected. His discourse was most effective! By way of encouraging the boys to persevere in their duties at school, he told them that he was once situated exactly as they were. The learning he first obtained was bestowed upon him in the same gratuitous manner. That he received the first rudiments of grammar at a free school in that Town; and, for all besides, he was indebted to the kindness of his friends and the persevering efforts of his own industry! He endeavoured to impress on their youthful minds that, without industry, nothing good or useful could be attained and so permanently established in the memory as to prove practicably valuable in life.

A story is related of this gentleman that may be worth repeating: it proceeds from so respectable a quarter that there is no doubt of its truth. In the early part of his life, before any idea was entertained of his becoming a clergyman, Mr. Wildbore had been noticed for his expertness at figures, and a certain readiness in calculations of all kinds, that was very extraordinary. He had made such rapid advances in this art that he surprised his instructors. Having heard of his singular abilities, a kind hearted old gentleman took him into his house, and indulged him in his love of books, and more especially in all his figurative propensities. This benevolent gentleman took a great fancy to his young protegé, Master Charles Wildbore. He was frequently employed on little missions where the servants were not thought sufficiently trustworthy, but Master Charles possessed the full confidence of

his benefactor on all occasions. Persons acquainted with Nottingham must be aware that it has long been celebrated for its good cellars and excellent ale. There is a famous old song on the subject, the burden of which is, "No liquor on earth is like Nottingham ale!" Now the good old man just alluded to had made himself conspicuous for his generous disposition and the general excellence of his tap. One day a few of his friends were assembled to taste it, Charles was instantly called to fill a pitcher of the best ale. The young arithmetician did not at first hear him; he was up to his middle in mathematics. On being called a second time, Charles came. The old gentleman bade him take particular care not to spoil the fineness of his ale by shaking the barrel, or any other carelessness, such as taking out the air-peg or loosening the spigot and faucet; but desired him to pay the utmost attention to what he was doing. Charles replied "Yes, Sir;" and immediately ran down into the cellar with the jug. Rather unfortunately for Charles, he had in his pocket the small piece of slate on which he had before been calculating and discussing a very knotty question in algebra, having just made out a regular and clear statement of its mathematical results. After Charles had been in the cellar a few minutes, the old gentleman rather impatiently called to him to make haste. This disturbed Charles in his favorite study; so, snatching up the jug, to his master he ran and placed it before the thirsty gentlemen. Judge their surprise when they saw the spigot sticking between Charles's teeth. He had placed it

there while figuring on his piece of slate in the cellar, but, in his haste, had brought it away with him and of course left the liquor running to waste on the cellar floor. Luckily, however, not many gallons were lost, for the old gentleman himself ran down to remedy the evil as far as it lay in his power. He readily forgave the blunder, but was cautious afterwards how he trusted Charles to draw his most excellent ale.

There was another person at Nottingham well known to me when I first began scribbling for the almanacks! This was a fine grey-headed old gentleman of the name of Pearson. His every look, every feature, bore the marks of intelligence, good-humour and good sense. He was well known and most highly respected; his private character was estimable and his public conduct rendered him popular. His literary qualifications were of the first order, in the line he aimed at!—His wit was sparkling, his humour excellent! There was always something to admire, even in the most playful productions of his pen.

Mr. Pearson, at this time, was the editor of Season's Almanack, as well as that of the wonderful *Physician* and *Astrologer* Francis Moore, then, and perhaps still, most singularly celebrated for "Nativity calculations," "Horoscopes" and "Astrological Hieroglyphics" and, above all, for his prognostics of the weather! Not one of these wonders did Mr. Pearson himself believe. Nay, he was once candid enough to say so to his employers, the Stationers' Company. He proposed omitting many of the conjuring and weather-wise observations, and to substitute matter of a more useful kind. But the

worshipful Company, having the good of their country at heart, declined the proposed alteration; *wisely* alledging that the *utility* of almanacks was not to depend on *their* opinion, but on the opinion of their customers. That utility was a matter of taste. But it was certain that whatsoever most increased *their* profits was to them the most useful: therefore they very much feared that the *improvement* of the work might injure the sale of it; and of course it would be very *unwise* to omit the *weather-wise* remarks.

Now these arguments were enough to puzzle any conjuror; and Mr. Pearson, though he had been conjuring for years, had not one word to say for himself! He was what is often called dumb-foundered. He was obliged to jump again into the moon and employ his time in his old trade of star-gazing!

Here let us hazard a few observations on the trade of almanack making, or rather of almanack *selling*. May not the very great sale of Moore's Almanack be considered as a barometrical index or graduated scale by which the intellect of the country may be guessed at, if not accurately measured? As far as relates to England and its different counties, perhaps, no better means of forming a judgment can be imagined, than the extensive sale of this, compared with that of the other almanacks. Some years of inquiry have induced me to believe, that this work circulates far and wide. However this worthy company has of late condescended to study the improved condition of the people by publishing several improved almanacks. A laudable undertaking, and calculated, in time, to effect much good, by the

gradual removal of general folly, prejudice, and superstition. These go hand in hand together, and, where they have once seated themselves, leave a stain on the mind that is seldom effaced. The consoling hope among rational beings, however, is that prejudices of all kinds are on the decline, and that new generations are daily springing up who employ themselves, with something better. These hopes are truly consoling, but, on the other hand, it is lamentable to think how slow is the progress of truth; and yet how very rapid, compared with what it was half a century ago. Only turn for example to America! Chiefly peopled in the first instance by Europeans; some going there from necessity, others from choice; the majority of them emigrating from their respective birth places in consequence of public abuses, suffering or persecution. Most of them, of course, carried with them prejudices, equally strong, but of another sort. These various prejudices, added to those which they found already existing beyond the Atlantic, created a kind of mongrel race, as inconsistent as if a simple peasant, or plough-boy, were hastily married to the daughter of a change-alley broker, and from tending and counting stock in the fields, sent to watch the turn of stocks in the stock market! This is something like going from the bullocks and bullocking manners of Smithfield, to the bulls and bears at the Royal Exchange! or from the smooth-faced frequenters of the Independant meeting-house, to the bearded congregation of the Jew's Synagogue in Duke's Place! I do not pretend to know much of America or of its inhabitants, but I do know that this part of the world

is greatly superior to it in liberality and general knowledge. The Americans made a bold, brave, and successful struggle for their independence; all the world admired them, except such as were interested in a contrary event. The world believed that the Americans had a just sense of their political rights. The principal men amongst among them no doubt respected those rights; but these great men, dropping away by degrees, in the course of time their places have been filled by persons not equally wise and hence the progress of virtue has been for a time impeded. Having obtained what they deemed their political rights, how is that word right interpreted? Thus—that the American merchant has a *right* to take his commodities to the best market he can find, and that it would be highly improper, the greatest of wrongs, to expect him to sell a packet of tobacco for five shillings when, at a place equally convenient, he could sell it for five shillings and two-pence. The right of getting an additional two-pence is with them of more value than any of their political rights. This spirit of gain attends them often on points where least expected. I am willing to believe that the Americans, (as a nation) are as good and as moral, as any in this part of the world :—yet, in the spirit of trade, they are I think *very* different. It is the money they can make by a thing, that is at all times their first care. I am aware that this is too often the case in England, but it is said that the Americans carry this spirit of trade far beyond English tradesmen. During the long continental war, the Hollanders were charged with

selling gunpowder to pepper their own carcasses; so I have heard of an American tradesman, an Ironmonger, who absolutely sold to two noted thieves the very implements by which his shop was broken open! Nay, he had at the time the strongest reasons to suppose that they were intended for that purpose. And so it proved. He had his shop pretty well watched, yet the robbery was committed, the two thieves taken and hung. The shopkeeper boasted afterwards of having cleared an extra profit by selling the tools in the first instance, and then of having received the stolen articles back again for nothing!

I will give another instance of the spirit of money-getting. I knew a person who for many years had been a shopkeeper and bookseller in America, and he told me that it was considered very ridiculous and highly improper for any man to think of the articles he sold further than what he cleared by selling them! Thus, he conceived it his duty to refuse sixpence for "Piety in Pattens," if he thereby lost the taking of sevenpence for either Bigotry or Blasphemy! We will charitably suppose that this American bookseller rather too strongly pictured his own mode of trading; it may serve, however, to give some idea of the principle on which trade is conducted by many who think very highly of themselves, and of their mercantile methods of fair dealing.

> Fair dealing is a law by custom made;
> A lie's allowable in way of trade!

Touching the booksellers, accept an anecdote which I had from the once well-known Dubois, who

was for many years the favorite of the laughter-loving Gods of the London theatres. By the bye, I am not aware that this performer has ever been mentioned with that degree of attention and respect to which he was fully entitled. I did not know him personally, till after his career in London, when he came to me at Taunton. I found him a man of strong intellect though of slender education, scarcely more than what he had been able to pick up in his progress through the world. The story of himself, here alluded to, was this.

While he was a boy, he travelled with an old German bookseller, who was in the habit of exposing his books both old and new on a stall for sale, at the different fairs and markets he frequented. This old German Sage—this dispenser of knowledge—this lover of literature, always kept a long stick by his side while attending his stall. He was a man of great observation and of few words; but his blows were most effective! they spoke volumes! Whenever the youth Dubois took up a book, and began to read, the old man would chide him for it, and this happened not unfrequently. Gruff looks and smart raps on the head with the long stick were bestowed without ceremony. But once, when all the gruff looks and sharp *raps* had been more liberally dispensed than ever, and not with the effect desired, young Dubois, (no customer being present,) seized a favorite volume, sat himself down at one end of the stall and quietly began to read. The old German giving him a violent blow with his stick thus addressed him.

"Vhy, hey day!—how now!—vat is all dis!—you sit down!—you read!—how oft I tell you no read? your bisness to sell, no read! you fool, you pupee, you jack-nape!—Vill you never kno better?—never learn wise?—How off I tell you—you tam dog!—you no look de inside de book, but de out side!—dere—de out side—dere is de price—mark de price—mark dat!—you never do good vid the book, if you no sell! you tam pupee! never mind de read, you sell—sell! dat is de ting! dat is all you have to do! no read, no look! but sell it!" Now what this old German said about the selling of books, I believe might be said by many others, but perhaps not so emphatically. Let me once more speak of Dubois: he was a very clever, industrious man. He would work: he would either do things himself, or stand by and see them properly done by others. This is the right sort of practical talent! without it I would advise no young man to think of the stage. Without these requisites he is sure to become a burden to himself, and to prove a bad bargain to the unfortunate manager who may happen to engage him; and the first endeavour of that manager will be how to shake off in a respectable way the new incumbrance he has taken on his already over-loaded shoulders.

Here let me make a few remarks on the very name of a theatre! The calling it a play-house, is, I am afraid, the cause of great evil. It would be adviseable to drop that name altogether; and, if theatre does not please, call it not a play-house but a work-house; I am sure that epithet would be more appropriate than

the other. As to workhouses, they were once play-houses, but of late, alterations have been made, and it is hoped for the better. The sick and infirm ought always to be exempted from labour; but the strong and healthy, (in order to keep them so) should have some useful employment. But it does not follow that we should go to extremes, and substitute slavery-houses for work-houses!—But to return once again to the play-house: I think the name is productive of more evil than may at first be supposed. A child who is fond of playing, may have a room set apart for the purpose, and very properly termed his play-house, but, amongst grown-up, rational men, the word "THEATRE" ought to carry with it the same degree of respect as the *theatre* at *Oxford*, where nothing but what is rational and useful can ever be heard, or exhibited. I will endeavour to show what mischief even the mere name of a place may produce in the opinions of the gay and unthinking.

Many a young man, during his education, or his confinement at a desk, or in a counting-house, or during the still longer period required for the necessary study and practice of any one of the liberal professions: I say, any youth, feeling the irksomeness,—the absolute labour, attendant on any one of these employments, might hear the word play-house pronounced, and be inclined to believe that no labour,—no work was there ever wanted; that there, play, mirth, music, dance, song, laugh, joy, folly and good humour, were all to be found in abundance; and that nothing of a contrary aspect was ever known within the

precincts of so delightful a place. Alas!—the truth lies on the very contrary side of the question, and constant attention and hard labour are the sure and real concomitants of a play-house. If this truth,—this manifest and certain fact,—were more generally impressed on the minds of all young people, it would prevent much waste of time and numberless disappointments. A simple youth was once asked if he could play on the violin? his reply was "I don't know,—I never tried." Now however we may smile at the simplicity of this reply, yet it was perfectly natural, and a great deal nearer the truth, than it would have been, had the youth said—"I never tried, but I think I can." Unfortunately, too many young men would feel bold enough to have given the latter answer, instead of the first. A few trials would soon convince any impartial man that it is as improbable that he should act a part without previous trial, as it would be that he should take up a fiddle for the first time and play a tune upon it. It is true, any man accustomed while a boy to repeat his stated task at school, might learn by rote any given number of lines, in a stiff sing-song "My name is Norval," fashion. So might a child draw the bow athwart the fiddle strings and waken a few notes from them—but, far as the latter is from being a musician, the former is from being an actor in the true sense of the word. The most perfect acting is that wherein the *art* of the actor is so concealed that the beholder is unaware that art is employed. Every look—every word—every motion should appear unstudied—the spontaneous effort of the moment.

As in a good picture we should be insensible that it is but a picture, forgetting the labors of the pencil in the truth of the representation. I might adduce many splendid instances of good acting, but little known to the world, and which circumstances have deprived of the notoriety they deserve, but it is invidious to single out names where so many are deserving. Old men, as myself, have their partialities,—call them prejudices if you will—we need not be ashamed of prejudices in favour of old friends. Phrenologists, whether their doctrine be right or wrong, it matters not, tell us that to an Actor two organs are essentially necessary—first the organ of "Secretiveness," to enable him to conceal his own character, and secondly the organ of "Imitation," to enable him to assume that of others. Now, whether the mind may be perused by ascertaining the shape and size of the skull, I neither know nor care;—but of this I am certain, that these two faculties are indispensible to an actor and let me advise those who make the stage their profession studiously to keep this in view, and, by patient attention to this ingenious analysis of the grand requisities, endeavour to acquire that command over themselves which is thus shown to be so absolutely necessary. This was the great secret which enabled the master spirits of bye-gone days to enjoy the admiration of the world and which gave to the Drama the first place among the polite arts. Probably these departed worthies have left their mantles behind them, but I own I am partial to those friends and wonders of my youth. Now, alas! many old favorities of the dra-

matic muse have paid the debt of nature: others are yet living, but have retired from public notice; yet, I am free to confess, (though not partial to sentimental slip-slop or the furious fighting, slap dashing, melo-dramatic stuff, that is so prevalent at the present time; yet I am free to confess that there are many good actors even now in London, and in the country there is no comparison between those who were once patiently endured in provincial theatres and the high degree of estimation to which most of them have now risen. And it must be admitted that there are many actors and actresses at present on the provincial boards who would grace the best of the metropolitan theatres. I have lived, thank God, to see the profession rise in general estimation; and it is only in the most ignorant of places and amongst the least informed of the people that strong prejudices exist.

To return to the almanacks: Mr. Pearson, already alluded to, was intimately acquainted with the Rev. C. Wildbore. I was told by a friend at the time I knew them, that they had both spoken of me in complimentary terms, touching the little poetical articles that I had ventured to send them; and their approbation was the highest—the only encouragement I hoped for.

Mr. Pearson's style of writing was truly pleasant and original. At this time he *managed* (I believe that was the word) both Moore's and Poor Robin's Almanacks, and it is said without offence to any gentlemen now living, who may have been engaged in the business—it is generally admitted that the genuine spirit of Poor

Robin either sunk with him, or did not long survive him. I mean not to infer that he was the first person who wrote under that title, but that he was the most successful. Even that genuine son of whim and frolic —that eccentric genius, O'Keefe, could not, in this species of writing, equal Mr. Pearson. A friend of mine (I think Mr. John Stafford) told me that, on the death of Mr. Pearson, application was made to Mr. O'Keefe to take his situation; but that, for some reason or other, he declined the editorship of Poor Robin. Mr. John Stafford, being an admirer, (like myself) of the great merit displayed by Mr. Pearson, took the praiseworthy care of printing and publishing, on his own account, a collection of poems written by this our mutual friend, under the title of "Poor Robin's Poems." I do not know whether the book be yet out of print: It was certainly but a small volume, but it contained matter that was worthy of the same shelf with the works of Peter Pindar.

One word more concerning Mr. Pearson and his customary employ. Like many eccentric men of talent, he was very apt to postpone every thing that appeared like labor to the latest moment, especially his annual task of composing the articles for the almanacks; and when at length he was compelled to proceed to work, he would say to his grand-daughter whose acquaintance I have since enjoyed, "Come, child, give me my pens, ink and paper. I must go to work or the Printers in London will scold me for delaying." Then he would fairly begin and accomplish it with incredible dispatch, for he always composed with great fluency.

This lady, his grand-daughter, descended from so worthy an ancestor, was afterwards wedded to Mr. Atherstone whose talents (as displayed in many poetical works that have attained great and deserved popularity) are too well known to need eulogium in these pages. His writings have given him a place in the first rank of our living poets. I return to Mr. Pearson.

In "Season's Almanack" and also in "Moore's" he would not only describe the configurations of the Planetary world, but he would conjure too! He would foretell the events of this Sublunary Globe and foresee that in England a certain old fellow who called himself "Poor Robin" and who had the audacity to style himself "Knight of the Burnt Island" would be quarrelled with and violently abused by one Francis Moore, Physician. While Mr. Moore knew and could plainly foretell that this very old Fellow, Poor Robin, would abuse him in his next Almanacks! Well, out they came and there, sure enough, the whole prophecies were literally fulfilled, just as this learned Conjuror, Mr Francis Moore, had foretold. Lots of abuse and ludicrous remarks were lavishly bestowed by "Poor Robin" on the fortune-telling faculties and wonder-working wisdom of his rival! the sooth-saying and all-knowing almanack maker! Readers on each side were well entertained by the mock quarrel, and very few were aware that both combatants fought with the same quill! So earnestly occupied was the mind of Mr. Pearson, by these literary encounters, and in so spirited a manner did he support them, that his grand-daughter often trembled for the result, and sometimes did that by

stratagem, which she could not effect by persuasion! In all these whimsical sparrings, as well as in his fiercest fights, the old gentleman was his own bottle-holder! The more frequently he dipt his pen in ink, the more frequently he swigged at the black bottle before him! Till those with him, who knew him best, began to fear that this witty wag, this sly old fox, who laid traps for others, might at last be caught in his own gin! In consequance of this his grand-daughter would observe the fit moment, and while he was intent on writing, she'd steal away his favorite black bottle, and substitute one of the same appearance, filled with water. The mind of the old gentleman was so thoroughly absorbed in his subject, that he would often continue writing and drinking without discovering the trick that had been played on him. But any finesse of this kind was sure of winning wit from him, and therefore was worth gambling for! Let it further be observed, that though gin may be very good when it produces good jests, yet, on the other hand, genuine wit, though mixed with mere water, is much better than brandy, though tempered with the strongest balderdash. Mr. Pearson was too wise to drink to excess; he never touched any thing but what was good, and his wit, like his spirit, was always of the best quality. But now, though with reluctance, I must leave the pleasantry of Mr. Pearson and his writings, and return again to the regular course of my narrative; that is, as far as rambling incidents can be brought within the bounds of something like consistency. I was still in my native town, Bingham; still fond of reading and of obtaining any kind of information

that fell in my way: while at school I devoured the books usually provided there; the Spectators, Tatlers, and various prose writings of Addison, Sir Richard Steele, and others, their friends and assistants: Then the poetry of Pope, Gay, Dr. Young, Milton, Butler, Thomson, Dean Swift, &c. in short every book that came in my path. I was charmed with any, and all of them! As yet, the Drama had not fallen into my hands so frequently as works of the above description: I had seen a few of the periodical magazines, but the first London newspaper I ever read, was, the "English Chronicle." About this time, Dr. Graham was making a noise in London! I remember reading an epilogue in the above paper, said to be spoken at one of the Theatres, I think, by the then Miss Young. I have never seen or heard of the epilogue since that time, but I remember two or three lines that formed a portion of it. Alluding to Graham, it stated

"That Doctor, he, who, but for Duns Terrestrial,
"Had gain'd the Indies by his Bed Celestial."

CHAPTER II.

Papers and Memorandums.

By this time, I trust, my readers are sufficiently well acquainted with the style and fashion wherein I have chosen to present these motley memoirs to the world. I have treated them, perhaps, somewhat unceremoniously, but I trust the heartiness of my feelings will excuse all manner of informality in the expression of them. I must confess myself wholly unpractised in the mysteries of the craft, and thus docked of at least half the advantages enjoyed by those who are well versed in the tricks of authorship, who can frame long sentences out of nothing, expand a grain of sense into a statute bushel of words, and in fact who remind one very forcibly of the glass-blower who can spin a thread of a thousand miles in length out of a pair of spectacle glasses or a dandy's pocket mirror. If I have not learned these arts, let it not be deemed a crime in me, and if I have too much omitted or compressed, let it be excused, inasmuch as the only source to which I can resort for a supply of material is the treacherous one of memory.

When, in my travellings through the many faced regions of the past, I greet the forms and images of my youth, I feel as one long estranged from the place of his birth, who, after the lapse of many years, returns to the scenes of his happy days. He knows the hill and the valley and the rivulet, the oak that is the child of centuries the spire and the church with the two melancholy old yews, around which he had so often gambolled in the gaiety of childhood; he acknowledges, with a tear of delight, the unfrequented groves of green ash or elm, and here and there, cottages that early acquaintance had made palaces to him; these he recognizes and joyously greets, even though time had flung his mantle over them and though the gardens, and the fields, and the hedges, may have put off the hue and vesture they once wore, and are become as it were strangers to his eyes. So is it with me. When I survey the various scenes of the past, I instantly recognize those objects that in their nature are most unchangeable, and here and there one of those more minute, which have been spared by some chance, while things around them have vanished. These I transfer to the pages of my note book, and who can wonder if they be desultory and very unequal in their importance.

Fashion, the most fickle of a fickle world, in former times so ordered it, that, to please, a work must have been composed with strict attention to order and argument. Not so now. Order is often disregarded in works that aim not at the awful title of a treatise. Memoirs and Biographies especially, should be so arranged, or rather disarranged, that they fatigue not the

mind of the reader by imposing upon him the labour of long attention to one subject. The world must be tricked into the perusal of a volume; it must swallow instruction, as children do medicine, in a sweetmeat.

But whither am I straying? If I do thus, I shall be accused of imitating Colly Cibber, and making this an "*Apology* for a Life" instead of a Life itself. I will then, hasten to return to the point from which I have digressed, and to the scenes of days that have flown from me for ever, yet not without leaving upon me and within me deep and indelible traces of their presence.

There is something very pleasing in such a survey of the past as I have now undertaken. In the evening of life, before the dim twilight of existence has yet commenced, or is at least not so far advanced as to make dim the objects around us, who is there, in whom memory is not the parent of his chiefest delights? For then, the present is fading rapidly from his view; the world *as it is* exists not for him—he ponders therefore on the world *as it was* and dwells in the country of the past. How, at such a moment, do the scenes and images of perished years hurry upon his soul clothed not only in their real hues of brightness, but arrayed in the added splendor with which imagination hath decked them. Thoughts which have slumbered for years again awake and come with a throng of fancies in their train, which are instantly recognized as the friends of former days: the dreams of our youth, wearing, now in their resurrection, all the gladness and gorgeousness that attended them at their first birth: Shut out, as we are by the infirmities of nature, from

the pleasures of the passing time, surely it will be forgiven an old man if he linger a little too long about the most pleasant scenes of the past, and dwells with a delight that others can scarcely conceive with the friends and companions over whom the stone has been raised and the green grass scattered for many a year.

My youth has nothing remarkable to make it worthy of a very lengthened notice.—Its incidents are common place—its characters ordinary. To avoid monotony, I have, therefore, rather sought to record the fugitive traits of well-known personages with whom that youth was made acquainted, than to dwell on my own less interesting history. Shall I err if I make the story of my life the thread with which I bind together brief remembrances of others more worthy of note, in the society of whom that life has been spent.

About this time, or soon after, I lost my father, My mother continued a widow for somewhat more than two years, when she received the addresses of, and eventually married a Mr. John Timm: she bore him one child, and died herself soon afterwards. This child, a daughter, was carefully and tenderly brought up, became an amiable, interesting young woman, and before she was well out of her teens, married a Captain Eminson, of the 15th. Light Dragoons. But it was thought that her father's over-indulgence had somewhat weakened her constitution, and she did not long survive her marriage. Her father, Mr. John Timm, was an industrious shrewd man, and in a few years amassed a handsome fortune for this his only daughter, my sister-in-law. But his shrewdness was of no avail; he was

greatly disappointed when she died, and her husband the Captain, marched off with the money given her as a marriage portion. Mr. Timm was a true father-in-law: he made us (myself and brother) work pretty handsomely, for which I remain grateful, and so I believe my brother thinks and feels. We are both of us still alive, and generally speaking, strong and healthy, while my poor sister the indulged child, has been dead for more than twenty years.

Such is too often the fatal consequence of over attention bestowed upon youth. I am convinced that were nature more studied by those to whom the care of children has fallen, we should keep at bay many of those diseases which are at present such fearful scourges of the human race. It is my maxim to obey Nature in all things; and what more pleasant guide could we make choice of? If we reflect for a single moment on the artificial state of society as now constituted and if we remember that terrible decree by which Nature punishes every deviation from her wholesome laws, shall we wonder that so many ills attend upon our hot-house existence!—or shall we not rather feel astonishment that we live even for a single year? Look at the child nursed in the lap of luxury—plied with meats and unwholesome spices, enveloped in the warmest clothing, lest the breath of heaven should visit it too roughly; confined in close apartments—the limbs deprived of their free play and thus wearing out the first hours of existence (which ought to be dedicated to the strengthening and improvement of the fragile frame,) in appalling indulgences and destructive habits.

Mark her again in the first blush of womanhood,—pale and pining—a blighted bud—a plant of a forced and unnatural growth. She shows not the light and laughing spirits that are the true sun-beams of youth;—she has not the fresh bloom of the morning on her cheek nor the strength of the young day in her limbs. She is wearied with a walk thrice round the garden, and is laid up for a month from the effects of an evening ramble to the cliffs some two or three miles from the spot in which she was reared. The wind verges toward the North West;—she cannot venture a foot from the door lest a cold prove the precursor of a consumption. What matters it that the sun is high and bright and the birds singing merrily and the village children, yet more blythe than they, dancing on the green to the unconcerted music of their own sweet voices;—the wind veers toward the North, and therefore the young lady cannot venture forth. The next morning perhaps it inclines toward the South—she is then emancipated from the fearful restraint of a close room and permitted to inhale the fresh breath of the spring: but she cannot enjoy it, for the warmest zephyr blows cold upon her, and the animal spirits once checked, are not, like a closed flowret, to be awakened by the first kiss of the sun. Again the vagrant wind whistles from the East;—then what a closing of doors and barring of windows! fires blaze—screens unfold their dusty wings—Fahrenheit rises ten degrees in estimation and takes his station in the parlour where the yonng lady herself lolls upon a sleep invoking sofa, her tender feet encased in lambs' wool stockings and a Turkey carpet,—her hands en-

folded in cuffs and mittens, and as many handkerchiefs about her neck as must have demanded the summer labour of ten thousand silk worms. Should she chance to escape from this ordeal, with sound lungs, she marries—bears a few sickly children—becomes a nervous subject, as it is emphatically termed, and at length dies of absolute exhaustion, at an age when others, more hardily educated, have not yet bidden farewell to the pleasures of youth.

I remember that at Guernsey, during a very severe winter, I saw the children of the principal inhabitants of the Island, running about the streets without shoes or stockings. When youths attained the age of ten, they were indulged with the former but not the latter, yet these children were seldom or never annoyed by chilblains, nor half so liable to colds as those who, in this country, are so sedulously preserved from wet feet and chilly fingers. But alas! imperious fashion has usurped the throne of reason and, what custom prescribes, example and argument may in vain endeavour to confute.

But to my story. My father-in-law rented a large farm of his brother at Normanton, about seven miles from Bingham, and over this farm I was made superintendant, though I was at the time scarcely able to take care of myself. During the first year of this duty, I resided with Mr. William Timm, who was accustomed to receive a great deal of company, and that the most respectable in the neighbourhood: sporting gentlemen of every description; clergymen, lawyers, doctors, and not unfrequently officers of the army, whose par-

ties were recruiting at Nottingham. We were in the practice of coursing, shooting, hunting or fishing almost every day during the proper seasons; but I was so much attached to reading, that, unless my presence was particularly required, I very often declined the amusements of the field.

There was an old gentleman, the Rev. Mr. Syms, the rector or vicar of the neighbouring parish, at whose house I was always cordially received. This well suited my taste: he had a good library of his own, to which I had always access and was also a subscriber to a book club in Nottingham: so that I had the pleasure of seeing both old and new books, as well as several reviews, magazines, &c. I had imbibed early in life, so early that I cannot say how, or when I received it, a taste of a romantic kind;—a passion, perhaps common amongst young men whose minds are somewhat ardent, or in any degree enterprising. I had conceived a desire of notice, of notoriety of some kind or other. If not talented, so as to be capable of obtaining legitimate and genuine notoriety, I fancied that something of an adventurous or perilous nature, might supply the deficiency. The words of Otway were grating on the hinges of my imagination, when he exclaims thus—

> "What! like a base—a common dunghill weed
> "Rot where I grow!! "

Sooner than that (thought I to myself) I will creep to the top of Saint Paul's and jump headlong to the ground! This was the very tip-top of romance! or romance on tip-toe! but a second consideration told me that this

would not do! I should be thought mad, and the fame of being a mad-man did not suit my taste. My second idea was this; I asked myself, can I contrive a method of jumping upwards instead of downwards? If I can accomplish this, my fame and fortune are secured for ever. Alas! I have been contriving ever since and am less likely to jump up than ever. But jumping is now out of the question. During the first months I spent at Normanton, I was much thrown into the company of ladies, who improved my manners and took from me a certain timidity, for which I was remarkable.

About this time, too, I indulged, without restraint, in the pleasing dreams of romance, and devoted my thoughts to the contemplation of those visionary fabrics which the inspired fancies of our poets and novelists had reared; or to those, scarcely less wonderful, to which my own busy imagination had given birth. Succeeding years have not wholly damped this active faculty, and even now, I am doubtful, whether indeed it be more advantageous or prejudicial to its possessor.

That it can and does bestow much intense pleasure, none who have ever tasted its sweets can deny. On the one hand, it is too apt, by contrasting them with its own gorgeous scenery, to make the less brilliant realities of earth, seem almost unworthy of us. What skies so bright—what meadows so green—what streamlet so crystal-like—what fountain so cool—what hill so high—what glen so wild—what wood so magnificent—but are surpassed, yes, infinitely, by the skies, the meads, the streamlets, the fountains, the hills, the glens, and the woods which imagination summons before the mind's

eye, when reason and reality are subjected to her sway. Then again, so pleasing is this faculty, those gifted with it are induced to indulge so freely in its banquets, as to abstract them from the more necessary but less exalted occupations of life. But, upon the whole, I am inclined to think that its advantages more than counterbalance its evils. As a never-failing source of happiness, it is, perhaps, the most lavish that earth supplies, and, where its treasures are not expended too extravagantly, it affords, I believe, a fund which in sickness, in sorrow, and in adversity, when the whole material world can offer no consolation and fortune averts her face from us with a frown :--it affords (I am confident for I have found it so), a generous relief from the weight of present care, and transports the sufferer from the rude scenes around him, to a bright and beautiful place that is unreal and unsubstantial, indeed, but to him as grateful as if it were truly all that it appears and its loveliness other than "the baseless fabric of a vision."

Indulging as I did without restraint in this fascinating faculty, a visit to the much renowned Forest of Sherwood, it may be supposed, was to me the source of great delight. I could not but recal the romantic stories that had first awakened my childish wonders; and, as I gazed on its majestic avenues of huge oaks, I almost believed that I beheld the forms of those ballad heroes going to and fro, and flitting from one dark covert to another. "Here" said I "may Robin Hood have many a time reposed or caroused with his merry men. Perhaps this old decayed trunk has felt

his arrow's point or witnessed one of his lawless struggles for plunder or the dying agonies of a forest deer expiring beneath his unerring shaft." Then, as my fancy warmed, I thought I heard the bugle notes swelling upon the wind, and the loud shrill whistle that told the startled traveller by what a foe he was beset. The freebooter himself would seem to stalk before me in his green robes;—his quivered followers, Little John and Allen-a-dale, methought, would glide down the green alleys and vanish among the dark foliage of a tree whose arms almost leaned upon the earth—while the twang of the bow and the hissing of the shaft seemed to startle the echoes of the wood. I envied the free and happy foresters. Like a true romancer, I made a Paradise of those things that were unattainable and believed that real happiness was only to be found in the freedom of an inaccessible forest, or the unrestrained exercise of a will that could ill brook control. Such were my dreams in the forest of Sherwood. I recal them now because I recollect the intense pleasure with which they were attended at the moment, and, if I dwell on the most pleasant reminiscences of my existence they at least will excuse it who know how much more some minds are inclined to recal the images of past pleasure than of past pain.

But a romance of another kind soon after this occupied my attention. I had perused over and over again with renewed delight, a *little* work, composed by a *great* hero, Sir Thomas Perkins, baronet, who resided at Bunny, a village on the road betwixt Nottingham and Loughborough. This eccentric man was re-

markable for his extreme fondness for wrestling, nay, he had actually published a volume on the subject. Such was his ardour for this sport, that he left by Will a certain sum of money to be annually wrestled for at Bunny Park, or its neighbourhood, and also, a prize for Bell-ringing which is still continued.

I once was present, when a boy, at one of these annual wrestlings!—I was roused into this sort of heroism by the florid descriptions often given me by an old man who had lived several years in our family; one Joseph Franks, who, in his youthful days, had won this glorious prize! and he ever afterwards wore round his waist the token of victory—the badge of honor—a strong leathern belt which was always given with the prize. Joseph and his son Thomas were ever boasting of this feat of valor—this test of manhood, strength and agility. For Thomas was also a hero in expectancy; and anxiously looked forward to the day when he should entitle himself to similar honors, by laying some aspiring competitor on his back and at his feet. Such rustic sports were universal in earlier days. It will be recollected that Shakspeare has introduced a wrestling match in his play of "As you like it!" and indeed other things of the kind were common in several of these midland counties, therefore it is probable that Shakspeare who was a native of Warwickshire thus took the hint, and carried over the example to the Forest of Arden. But as he himself has observed, breaking of bones is strange sport for ladies. However there is no accounting for tastes! I will not find fault with any of our rural amusements! they are the *inheritance* of the people.

The late Mr. Windham, was a very sensible as well as a very humane man: and he patronized bull-baiting. So would I, were I sure that the bulls liked it as well as the dogs, (brutes of course) that bait him. But I have my doubts on that particular. Mr. Cobbett, too, has been and is yet perhaps a great advocate of cudgel-playing, though, by the bye, I never heard of his sharing the sport himself. I believe too he agreed with Mr. Windham in his ideas of single-stick, foot-ball, cudgel-playing and bull-baiting; but, for my part, I would rather take a bull by the horns, than encounter the forcible hits of Mr. Cobbett's brain-cudgel! so I will not hazard the chance of incurring his displeasure. Many of our noble lords, too, patronize boxing and rat-catching. I much wonder that Mr. Cobbett does not exercise his talents in this line. Every body will allow that he is capable of giving quick and knock-down blows! and as to rat-catching, if he were permitted to enter a certain *old house* in Westminster, how all the Rats would scamper about! I verily believe, if free and unmuzzled, that Billy Cobbett would more speedily clear the said house of rats, than would the Dog Billy, the celebrated canine rat-catcher. But we have not yet quite concluded our history of wrestling and Sir Thomas Perkins. I cannot yet help thinking that broken shins are not quite so bad as broken heads, knock-down blows, and shattered ribs. In the church of the aforesaid place, Bunny, is erected, at least it was visible when I was there more than thirty years ago, a monument sacred to the memory of this illustrious hero. At full length I there

beheld a statue of Sir Thomas Perkins himself, in the attitude of a wrestler. There he stood with a fixed and steady eye, and an admirable stone-like firmness, as if on the watch to lay his adversary as flat on his back, as death, alas! has long since laid poor Sir Thomas. On the pedestal, was engraved a verse from a chapter of the book of *Genesis*, where Jacob is reported to have wrestled with an angel, and in the encounter is somewhat injured in the hollow of his thigh!

These things were, but, whether they are now, I cannot tell. Lord Rancliff is the present owner of Bunny Hall and the estates round it; I have seen his Lordship, but whether he likes ringing or wrestling, I cannot exactly say. He bears the character of a popular and independent Member of Parliament, where if he chooses to wrestle with ministers he may have no lack of practice!!

I must return for a moment to old Joseph Franks, who would often talk of the wonderful deeds he had done, the matches he had made and won! He would show his scars that told of the battle and the emblems of victory! He would recount the sums of money lavished on him, though he never exhibited any, for it was all spent long before. Then, in his own opinion, he was so illustrious, so exalted in the temple of fame! and so indeed he was in the estimation of his own circle; for, like Sterne's midwife, every famous personage has a circle of his own, beyond which nobody knows or cares any thing about him. Of a verity, I believe that the "*Circle of Fame*" enjoyed by old Joseph Franks, and which he *conceived* would hand down his name to

posterity, was, at least, a mile and a half in diameter! That is, if we measure it from east to west, but from north to south it was considerably less than half that distance. Altogether, perhaps, making due consideration for projecting points and angles, Joseph enjoyed a "*Circle of Fame*" almost three miles in circumference! He had also another gratification, which, had he been living, it would have been very hazardous to make known; but now that he is himself beyond the jurisdiction of a Justice of the Peace, there can be no harm in mentioning it. He was most dexterous in destroying Polecats, netting Partridges and snaring Hares; but his fame as a wrestler far exceeded all his other accomplishments. His eyes would flash and his face would glow, whenever he mentioned his achievements! He would boast of his belt, the badge of bravery, with as much, or even more enthusiasm, than Buonaparte displayed in narrating his passage of the Alps, the storming the Bridge of Lodi, or the voyage to Egypt; nay, more than ever Lord Wellington was heard to boast of the glorious Battle of Waterloo!

Somewhat about this time I began the very useful practice of keeping a kind of note book in which I was wont to register my thoughts and observations on men, manners and opinions. To this I committed many little anecdotes and adventures which more particularly attracted my attention, but, of course, in the private memorandums of one so young and so unpractised in composition, much is to be found that would be unfit for perusal, as either too trivial in itself, or as relating only to domestic occurrences which cannot possibly be interesting to any save him by whom they were intrusted

to paper. From these notes, therefore, if indeed I may be excused for giving a place to any of them in these uncertain pages, I will, with the reader's permission, extract such as may either be amusing in themselves as narratives of singular occurrences or illustrative of the early habits, thoughts and sentiments of the writer.

I have yet another object in view in thus affording a few specimens of my note book. I trust that it will enforce by example the passing observations that I am about to hazard on the utility of this practice, which has proved so pre-eminently advantageous to myself.

In the first place, it creates a habit of thinking. When our memorandum book lies before us, we are desirous of seeing in its leaves some fruits of our intellectual labours, and moreover, when a commencement is once made—one subject suggests another, until we are more at a loss what to select than how to obtain matter. It enables us, by comparing the productions of one year with another, to determine the advance which the mind has made, and, by observing the different gradations of improvement at different times, to discover in a great degree, what causes or studies have produced the rapid advance at one period compared with another. It is too, a memorial of feelings which probably would otherwise have vanished from the recollection and a source of amusement and delight in after years—when they serve to recal a thousand images of youth and all its warm, generous and expectant feelings. I know of no more delightful companion than a note book which contains the thoughts flung from the soul in the glow of the moment in the early

years of youth, which, if they do exhibit the immaturity of the spring time, yet bear with them all its freshness, fragrance and tenderness. The following are selected from my note book, and the date appended will mark the age and season in which they were written.

JULY 19, 1786.—I have been reading an author who says "I shun the company of agreeable women, for fear of becoming their captives!" Is not this being somewhat too cautious? Tis hard if we cannot enjoy the friendship of agreeable women without sliding into a more embarrassing passion!

JULY 21.—I hate scandal, nobody hates it more; and yet some little may be said in favor of it: at least, in favor of that propensity which many feel to make remarks on the actions of their neighbours; and some people are kept within the line of their duties, more from the dread of gossipping tongues, than from hatred to vice or adherence to virtue.

SUNDAY JULY 23.—I esteem a friend as a *Looking glass.* The one serves to dress the mind by, as we consult the other to adorn the body. But the former should be as candid as the latter; and equally impartial! A perfect mirror reflects us just as we are, without regard to blots or blemishes;—So should a true friend tell us of our faults, that we may amend them.

AUGUST 5.—I have been reading Sterne: of course am delighted with him. His humour and his sensibility are most fascinating. It is difficult to say, whether he affects most the head or the heart!

AUGUST 6.—A relation of mine told me to-day that I was like a "fish out of water." I thought the proverb somewhat applicable, or I should not now repeat it. I am in one sense, like an unfortunate fish;—I am perpetually gasping—not for water—but for information! I gaze and gape continually, but cannot find sufficient to supply my wants. I catch at, and obtain a few vagrant flies, but they often escape me, and then the stream is so shallow, the current so weak, and there are so many impediments in the narrow creeks and channels, which I must pass, that I 'm absolutely gravelled before I can make my way into the broad river whither my desires lead me. But it is useless to complain, I must wait the coming of fortunate winds and tides, before I reach the depths of experience, and the wide ocean of real knowledge.

AUGUST 12.—I was taking a walk last night, for I prefer the four hours at the close of the day to the other four-and-twenty. What can be more refreshing, or afford greater delight, than a rural walk of this kind, after the bustle and fatigue of a summer's day? "Eternal fountain of our feelings! 'tis now I trace thee!" As I was returning homeward through the village, I passed the cottage of an old cobbler. He wore his spectacles, (which being rather too small for him, pinched his nose pretty tightly, and increased his natural snuffle!) He was reading loud and sentimentally. I found that this old cobbler possessed high notions, delicate feelings, and a florid, fine-spun, fancy-woven imagination! I listened for a few seconds: "It is a very pretty story," said his wife. "It is something like

the "Death of Abel," said the cobbler; and then he proceeded with the thread of his story, and began to wax quite warm with it. It was an old tale in a very old magazine: a tale of wonder! and wonderfully pathetic! "Why don't you go on with the story?" said Mrs. Heelpiece: "I will my dear!" said the cobbler. "But let me snuff the candle! where's my daughter Matilda?" "Here father, I am coming directly." "Coming! don't you hear the child crying? rock the cradle, Hussy! Here, take my leathern apron and wipe its nose!" "I want to finish this pretty story," said the cobbler." "Ay, do," said Mrs. Heelpiece, "It is very fine! very tender!" "Tender!" exclaimed the old cobbler, "why it be as tender as lamb's skin, and as beautiful as red morocco!" Mr. Heelpiece began to read: his wife was so much moved by the story, that she shed tears. The infant awoke and began to squall. The cobbler damned Matilda for not rocking the cradle. I laughed at their pathetics, marched onward and left them all at loggerheads together!

This story is truth; and truth gives force even to trifles.

AUGUST 14.—It has been observed by foreigners that Englishmen, when they meet each other, are remarkable for talking about the weather. In a climate so changeable as ours it is not much to be wondered at. But it is rather curious to observe how small a number of set phrases are used on such occasions. This has been a very unpleasant day, and as often as I have crossed the door into the street, "How it *rains!*" said one: "Quite a wet day!" said another;

"Very dirty and slippery!" said a third.—Then if you entered a neighbour's house, "What heavy showers we have had!"—"I was in hopes it was clearing up about noon!" "No, no, we shall have more yet!" "Observe the quarter the wind's in!"—"Ay, south-west!" "We shall have a whole week of such weather!" "Do you think so?" "I do!"—"So do I!"—"Look at yonder dark clouds!"—"Very black indeed!"—"Oh it will certainly RAIN!"—"Ah!—Zounds! it does rain!"—"Nay it pours!" "Let us go in directly!"—Thus people talk, and thus they run for shelter!!

AUGUST 24.—There is scarcely any person but prides himself on something or other: we are all at times subject to some degree of vanity. Enough has been said about the "Love of fame" amongst men, and the "Love of conquest" among women. These have been considered with reference to the higher ranks of society; but it is much the same with the other grades. I knew a farmer who prided himself on the size of his fist! another on the breadth of his foot! and another on the width of his mouth! This last fellow injured his jaw-bone by trying to force between his teeth the egg of a goose.

The likings and dislikings of the different ranks of society, are much the same, only the objects are varied. A peasant is often as pleased with a game of nine-pins, as a poet with his nine muses: and a hungry ploughman will as greedily devour a piece of plum-cake, as a poet-laureate will swallow his cup of sack!

AUGUST 25.—I yesterday noticed the different humours of one sex, I will now make a few remarks on

those of the other. Even women, in the lower ranks of life, are not totally insensible to the allurements of Fame! A few days ago I heard some females singing while at work in the fields, and this was the burden of their song:

> "Come all you lads and lasses; together let us go
> "Into the pleasant corn-fields, our valour for to show!"

Much cannot be said in favor of the poetry of the two preceding lines, yet the 'for to' may be useful to eke out the metre; and the 'valour' ought to be considered very emphatic! for certainly there is more utility and more real glory in cutting and safely housing a field of ripe corn, than in mowing down men, and leaving them mangled or dead on the field of battle. At least, such is my opinion: but, I confess, it may be thought a very unfashionable one! However, I am not without hopes, that, in future, lambs may be thought less dangerous than lions! and that more merit may be descried in gracefully sheathing a sword, than there could be in gracelessly drawing it. Valour is good, but vapour is worthless!!

It has been my fate to be acquainted with many persons and parties of very different opinions, and sometimes of opposing interests: I think that this has been of service, by teaching me to appreciate the value of their opinions, interests and prejudices. Speaking in a general way, I have usually found that, in one thing or other, all parties are alike to blame; and that those who are the most moderate, have, nine times in ten, the most justice on their side. Where deserving people

are under the influence of mistake, it is the duty of all real friends to remove the existing differences.

It is truly astonishing and would surprise any one who never made the trial,—how speedily a few brief sentences, or explanatory observations in favor of an absent party, may tend, if judiciously applied, to remove impressions that would otherwise be irreconcilable. On the other hand it must be obvious to every observer that, by giving an envious or ill-natured turn to sentences casually spoken, or by a studious endeavour to fan any accidental spark of displeasure, into a flame of absolute dislike, small disputes may be aggravated to great offences; such conduct is always blameable, and what every man of good breeding, with good sense and a good heart, will always be studious to avoid; he would rather be most anxious and most happy to draw friends closer together, by stronger ties of esteem, than to keep them wider apart by inflaming their casual differences into quarrels.

AUGUST 31.—Every body knows that we have a comedy, called "The Wonder—A Woman keeps a Secret!" It is very true; and it should be thought a *miracle* when a man keeps one! It may at first be imagined an easy matter, but keeping a secret is more difficult than many conceive it to be. Women are joked on this subject, as being the most prone to tattle; but, though it may pass as a joke, yet as far as regards the sexes, there is not much difference between them. Women, where they truly love, are the most confiding; therefore, when they confide their secrets to the object of their

affections, it ought to be considered as complimentary to them, and not as matter of reproach.

The female sex should be placed on an equal footing with ourselves,--should have equal liberty in all respects, before we can properly judge of them: for my own part, I think that in every respect a sensible prudent woman is a superior being to a foolish or imprudent man!

It is quite another question whether females ought to be educated like men? As the world goes, at present, I certainly think they ought *not*. But there is a great deal to be said on both sides; all the first principles of good sense, should, I conceive, be taught without reserve: but, as to the deductions, and the consequences drawn from those first principles, they are a study too complicated, too laborious for the female sex, of whom we require most of the domestic duties. It will be seen, at once, that these duties are so indispensable, that the fair sex can never (generally speaking) have at their command sufficient time and opportunity to compete with man in the acquirement of learning and the cultivation of mind necessary for the highest results of real knowledge.

I see nothing to be alarmed at in female philosophers, provided their minds have a natural bias that way, I wish only to account in some degree for the fact being otherwise. Women have been less instructed than men in all times and all ages. Homer, who lived ('tis said) about three thousand years ago, has told us according to Pope "Trust not the sex that is so rarely wise!" Now instead of reproaching the sex for their want of

wisdom, I consider it a pretty sure sign that women were even then, (as they have been since) most probably kept in a state of subjection to the lordly will of man. However, notwithstanding their long thraldom, I am of opinion that our ladies of the present day are in their mental capacities greatly superior to any of the heroines in Homer's Iliad.

I do not mean to say that they have such resolute notions of hardihood and defiance of danger; nor such a thirst for valorous achievements: but they have kept pace with all the improvements and refined notions of the present state of society; and, on the whole, are on that account more rational and more valuable beings.

It may be questioned by some, whether the refinements alluded to are in reality improvements or not? I think they are. Woman can never hope to outdo man in personal strength or warlike act: therefore she has a right to effect her purpose, and preserve her share of rule by such means as she thinks most advisable. What she cannot do by strength, she does by stratagem; and she often produces greater results from the exercise and discipline of her forces in the arrangement of pins before a looking glass, than even Minerva could perform by "The conquering sword and shield!"

OCTOBER 19.—I am always happy when I am in good or proper company; but, if I cannot have such company, I had much rather be alone. By good, I mean such as are by birth and circumstances ranked above me; and, by proper company, I mean all who are

worthy and intelligent. No matter what a man's situation in life may be; if I find he possesses any kind of knowledge in a superior degree to myself, I court his acquaintance, am proud of his good opinion, and honor him for his talent.

OCTOBER 22.—How apt we are to discover little singularities in others, and be quite blind to similar habits in ourselves. I scarcely know any person, but is in somebody's mouth. "A strange fellow!"—"A queer dog!"—"An odd chap!"—"A droll hand!"—"A rum genius!"—"A comical blade!"—or, "A very whimsical character!"

My young friend Charley used to call Sir George "An eccentric being!" Sir George called him "A flighty youth!" Gregory and Gargle were thought "Funny folks!" Patch and Patty were "Pleasant people!" and they all of them pronounced me "A devilish great oddity!"

OCTOBER 27.—This day, when a boy, I used to call "Plum-pudding day!" it being my birth-day. I am now, (or ought to be) arrived at that point where a youth is supposed capable of taking care of himself: I am now 21 years of age.

OCTOBER 28.—I have just been thinking, since we have had "The art of love,"—"The art of poetry," &c. that a poem might be written, and called "The art of sleeping!"

It would be a safe title for any young author, should the language be very dull, it might be supposed to carry into effect the intention of the writer: for

however heavy, and flat the lines might lag along, should they even make the reader yawn, or give him offence, "The sound might seem an echo to the sense!"

OCTOBER 31.—Having, while a boy, imbibed a strong bias in favor of theatricals, I naturally became desirous of knowing all I could of persons and matters connected with the stage. During a short vacation at Drury Lane, Mr. Dignum the singer, came down on a visit to some of his friends in Nottinghamshire: amongst them was a gentleman of the name of Spencer: he had a numerous circle of acquaintance, and was held in general estimation for his many good qualities.

From this gentleman's introduction, I heard Mr. Dignum sing in several private parties, during the two or three days he continued at Nottingham. Several gentlemen, and particularly Mr. William Timm, pressed him to pass some time with him at his house at Normanton. Hunting and coursing became the order of the day, and it fell to my lot to choose a horse on which to mount our cockney sportsman, for such he was considered by the whole party. I had been some months in the family, and knew well the qualifications of all the sporting dogs, and favorite horses; and I selected one for Mr. Dignum, as gentle as a lamb;—one that would hop over a style like a greyhound, either with or without a rider;—if without one he would stand quietly to be remounted, as if best pleased to have a burden on his back! I soon perceived that this our new sportsman understood very little of horses, or the management of them, for he was scarcely across the saddle, ere, to secure his seat, he stuck both spurs into

the horses sides; I tried, but in vain, to make him keep his heels out and his toes in. Not being able to accomplish this, I took off his spurs! still the horse at times winced a little, whenever he felt the rider's heels rubbing against his ribs. As soon as all were mounted, we started directly. Mr. Dignum obeyed my instructions and when we came to a stile, hedge, or ditch, or a leap of any kind, we dismounted; but unfortunately he frequently found great difficulty in getting over himself!—A stile he could make shift to cross, but in attempting to follow his horse over a low hedge or ditch, he often completely scarified himself, and was twice plunged up to the knees in water.

He found too (being rather a short punchy man) some difficulty in remounting from his horse, for the animal, though good tempered, was a spirit, especially when he heard shouting, or saw other horses galloping before him. Besides he was fond of dancing, and frequently veer'd about, impatient to keep pace with his companions in the sport! These difficulties rather inclined our new sportsman to preserve his seat while leaping and some of the party so advised him: but I thought, that though voices are in youth sometimes improved by what is called breaking, yet in the present instance the experiment was too hazardous! Voice-breaking and neck-breaking were two distinct things. I knew that his voice was very good at present, and he ought not to run the risk of breaking it again. Putting his neck out of joint might disorganize his musical structure, which now warbled so delightfully! And any change might probably be for the worse. My ar-

guments were sufficiently powerful, and he avoided the danger of leaping for the rest of the day:—but his horse happening to stumble, he was once flung so forward, that falling with his face between the ears of the animal, his nose was set bleeding most profusely, but he saved himself from saluting the ground by clinging with both arms round the neck of the horse: I rode up to release him from his perilous situation! After crossing and re-crossing two or three fields, one of our party found a hare sitting snugly in her form, and he instantly in a sportsmanlike tone cried out "See! ho!"—See! ho!"—Our friend Dignum wanted to see the hare while she was sitting. She was shown to him, but he thought it only a large brown stone, till a gentleman with his whip set the timid creature a going, which the dogs immediately pursued and in the course of a few minutes destroyed.

After riding over some adjoining fields, Mr. Dignum himself was the next to cry "See! ho!" "See! ho!" He declared he saw a hare creeping into a furze bush. There! there! said he, pointing out the place. But on reaching the spot it proved neither *hound* nor *hare*, but a hedge-hog! This of course produced a laugh, and being near the village of Cotgrave, the clergyman (who, by the bye, had the day before been one of the party) invited us all to rest and take a luncheon with him, which was readily acceded to. The half hour or rather the full hour or more that we passed here, was indeed very pleasant. There happened to be a piano-forte in the room, which attracted Mr. Dignum's attention: he sat down to the instrument and gave us about half

a dozen of his best songs. Those whose subjects were the sports of the field, exactly suited the tastes of the company present, and it was agreed on by all, that, in as much as regarded singing, he was by far the best sportsman amongst them.

The next two days were spent in a similar manner; sporting in the morning and singing in the evening. But the scene was changed to Bingham, (my native place) where it happened to be a kind of holiday time, and several of my friends had the pleasure of hearing Mr. Dignum sing at their own houses.

By the bye, not very long after this period, (November) I saw him in London, and continued occasionally to correspond with him. A niece of his became a member of my company some time afterwards, and stayed with me several months at Taunton and other places.

NOVEMBER 18.—My thoughts on Independence were required of me yesterday by a friend: I replied, that, with the aid of punning, we might prove every man independent, or, the contrary. Thus—rich and poor live alike on their own ways and means. The ways of one are sometimes the ways of the other, but their means have generally different meanings. By means, some mean the opportunities they possess of providing for themselves; that all have different modes and *means* of providing their provisions, often as different as the provisions they have to provide.

The rich man, or what is often called the independent man, is the most dependent being existing! He neither sees, hears, or feels for himself! He depends on all

who give him money, all who receive money from him, and all who owe money to him! He cannot take money intended for him without the consent of the giver; he cannot receive without the willingness of those that pay; and, as to money owing to him, he certainly cannot have it unless the debtor has it and is willing to pay it to him.

DECEMBER 1.—Just arrived in London, at the Castle and Falcon, Aldersgate Street: I scarcely know half a dozen people in town. But—

> ——"The world is all before me
> "Where to choose
> "My place of rest, and (I trust) providence my guide!"

DECEMBER 4.—Have been to Westminster Abbey. The poet's corner engaged my chief attention. A plain stone, with "John Dryden" upon it; a bust, with "O, rare Ben Jonson" under it; and then Shakspeare, Thompson and many other names that gratified my taste, and filled me with a species of enthusiasm.

DECEMBER 5.—Just returned from Drury Lane Theatre—my first visit: "School for Grey Beards" and "The Liar." I wished that many of my Bingham friends had been with me.

DECEMBER 9.—At Drury Lane again! "Venice Preserved" and "Bon Ton." Mrs. Siddons in Belvidera exceeded all I have ever seen before: Mr. Kemble in Jaffier was very good; but he did not surprise me like his sister.

DECEMBER 11.—At Covent Garden: "Romeo and Juliet" and "Barataria:" very well pleased with the whole. But Mr. Lewis in Mercutio struck me as most admirable.

DECEMBER 21.—Just come from the Jew's Synagogue: heard some fine singing, Leoni and a young person called Braham.

JANUARY 1. 1787.—A friend of mine has sent me a few verses, among which are the two following lines, which I conceive to be very good ones,

"Gay scenes, for which young bosoms burn,
"Are hinges on which vices turn!"

To which let me add—

"Gay scenes soon change—we wisdom's lessons scoff,—
"Time's hinges turn,—and Life's last doors drop off.

APRIL 3.—The following is an epitaph on a Smith and Farrier, who lies in the church-yard at West-Ham, near London.

EPITAPH.

My *Sledge* and *Hammer* lie reclined,
My *Bellows*, too, have lost their wind;
My *Fire's* extinct, my *Forge* decayed,
And in the dust my *Vice* is laid;
My *Coal* is spent, my *Iron's* gone,
My last *Nail's* driven, my *Work* is done.

JULY 8.—Since I was brought up, like many others, among money-getting people, how came I to turn aside into a different path? seeking for mirth instead of

money? sense instead of silver? good sense instead of golden opinions?

Because (as before observed) I wish to see the world! I could not bear the idea of staying for ever in one place.

As Pope has it

> "Fix'd like a plant to one peculiar spot
> "To draw nutrition, propagate and rot!"

Pope indeed! how came Pope to pop into my pericranium? Being among farmers and agricultural people instead

> Of Popes and Miltons, Youngs and Shakspeares,

I should have confined myself

> To Ropes and Millers, Dungs and Sheep-shears!

Some reason! but a bad ryhme, and out of season.

JULY 26.—Just arrived at the Swan Inn at Newport Pagnell. Brought a letter from Mr. Hudson to Mr. Shatford; all very pleasant so far: heaven send me good luck.

JULY 28.—No qualms arise yet. I have gone too far to retreat: I have been all this morning studying a character.

AUGUST 1.—I am now, what I have long wished to be, on the stage, as an actor! I have received money for my services! little enough to be sure; but, probably as much as I have deserved; for I am humble in my own opinion, and not sanguine in my expectations of success. This is the first time I ever received money as *hire* for any supposed services!!

MONDAY, MAY 12, 1789. I have been at many places since I wrote my last note! I am now at Buckingham; and have often been delighted with walking in Stowe Gardens! I sometimes take a book in my pocket, sit down and read in some of the temples dedicated to the poets, or to the heathen deities!

I wish I had some of my old friends with me from Nottinghamshire: they would be highly pleased with the sights I have daily before me.

AUGUST 28, 1790. I took up this book by *chance*, and find it is more than two years since I wrote my last NOTE. I am now at Brighthelmstone where I was last year at this time; of course this is my second season here—all very pleasant, gay and fashionable, blessed with the smiles of Royalty.

SALISBURY, JANUARY 31, 1793.—A considerable time has passed since I wrote the above: I am now a Manager, in partnership with my friend Shatford.

My time is so much engaged in business, that I have not leisure to write notes as I used to do. I am less romantic than formerly, but I hope I am equally honest.

MAY 27, 1795.—I am now, and have been for more than a year, a married man, and a father; and stationed in a London Theatre, (Covent Garden). The *latter* consideration would once have gratified my feelings more than it does now. Time makes great changes in our ideas; but still I remain as happy as most men can be.

Here closes my Note Book—I trust that the few extracts from it which I have transferred to these pages, will find excuse and favor in the eyes of my readers. The latter notes will be found to have been written at times far apart, for, after I had entered into the business of life,—when I had chosen the stage as the scene of all my future toils and troubles as well as hopes and pleasures;—when I had determined to make my joy consist in the "fickle breath of popular applause," and had chosen the pursuit of the most fascinating of all fame, rather than the dull, though more profitable, retirement of a country town, at a desk or in a shop; when I had set my future fortunes on such a die, I found that I had little leisure to dedicate to the scribbling of rough notes and making memorandums of insignificant occurrences. With the regularity of my diary, closes the regularity of my life; henceforth I am not to be found day after day superintending the management of cattle, moralizing and romancing, but striving to make my way in the world through a crowd of competitors, now falling—now rising—now here—now there—to-day basking in the smiles of fortune,—to-morrow cowering beneath her frown—now gay and single, unloving and unloved,—now married and a father,—first a servant,—then a master and a manager, at one moment blest with plenty and prosperity, at another poor and dependant. Now untrammelled by domestic cares—now burthened with a large family—in short, experiencing all those manifold changes which the history of any long life must furnish abundantly, but which occur to none so frequently as to such as

pursue those professions which depend wholly on the fickleness of fashion, as the drama, poetry, painting, music, and indeed all the fine arts, and in none of these so numerously as in that most unstable of all pursuits—the stage.

CHAPTER III.

I am now about to enter upon that portion of my life which saw me launch myself upon the world, to endure whatever winds and tides it might be my chance to encounter. Now my wanderings commence—now begins the story of a roving existence whose greatest delight was change, and which, in the pursuit of applause, led me into scenes so various—scenes of joy and sorrow—of humour and dulness—of mirth and sadness—of prosperity and adversity—so that, when I review the memory of past events, they throng so thick upon me that I cannot give them the order which a history should demand.

Rambling from place to place and possessing a home in none, I have, it may naturally be supposed, acquired a love of change and a detestation of monotony which probably will never be subdued.

And, as was my life, so must be its reminiscences. It would be vain for me to promise any thing like regularity of detail, for I know not what regularity is. I will therefore content myself with a brief narrative of the leading features of my fortunes, and, having so done,

endeavour to afford the reader a few hours amusement with a desultory and miscellaneous collection of things and thoughts which have occurred to me in the course of my varied existence. These I shall throw together without much attention to order, and, if I cannot awaken an interest in my story by its gradual developement and pathetic climax, I shall at least deserve the negative merit of being neither tiresome nor affected. In all cases I shall rather endeavour to call forth a smile than a tear. My own existence has inclined to the bright and happy and I would have that of others the same. I have ever enjoyed a peculiar taste for the humorous and whimsical, and scenes which have exhibited this character are more vividly written on my memory than others of a more sad complexion. I trust therefore that my readers will take it in good part, if in the following pages they find the records of comedy rather than of tragedy—of the gay and light, rather than of the heavy and sad.

From the preceding extracts from my note book it will be gathered, that, soon after I became of age, I left my uncle and went to London where I imbibed an increased love of the stage, indeed so much so, that I determined to make choice of it as a profession. An opportunity soon after offered itself and I went to Newport Pagnel with a letter of introduction to Mr. Shatford the manager of a company then performing in that town, and was by him engaged to make trial of my talents. With him I travelled for some time and then proceeded to Brighton with Mr. Cross of whom more will be said hereafter. But I did not remain here long,

for after a while I returned to Mr. Shatford and eventually contracted a partnership with him in the management at Salisbury.

This outline of the early part of my career will enable the reader to understand the anecdotes and reminiscences which I am about to string together. But I forgot to mention the poetical turn which I had taken during my residence with my uncle. Indeed this taste for committing the sin of rhyme has adhered to me through life and will not, I fear, be separated but by death. Among others, having an utter detestation of such characters, I wrote the following.

EPIGRAM.

A fop oft strutted through a farmer's yard,
Nor paid the owner e'en the least regard:
"Stop, mun, (cried Hodge) dost know me?"—'Know you, boor?
'I never saw your ugly face before!'
"But I've seen thine (said Hodge) this month, I swear."
'A month, you clown! I've been but nine days here!'
"Nine days! not see? ah, now the cause I find—
"Puppies (quoth Hodge) be always nine days blind."

But fops were not the only objects of my detestation, I had, strange to say, an invincible aversion to many of the domestic duties which have frequently been the theme of the muse's displeasure. In sooth, I know of

nothing so utterly inimical to poetry as the sights and sounds and smells that annoy us on the days of cleansing and sweeping, in my opinion, infinitely more to be deprecated than the worst of purifying penances in the worst days of Popery. My indignant muse gave vent to her feelings in such a strain as the following.

My pen I snatch and try to write plain prose,
Some burning tag-rag stuff offends my nose;
For purer air I'm each apartment seeking,
But noxious vapours every where are reeking!
Put to strange shifts, and numerous shifts while trying,
I'm shivering wet, while all things round are drying.
'Tis worse, far worse, than standing with bare feet,
At Christmas, doing penance in a sheet!

I pace the garden, heavy as a sledge,
"Linen (as Falstaff says) on every hedge."
There fringed curtains wave, like clouds in air,
Each ruffled shirt's "a ravell'd sleeve of care."
Vainly I muse on poesy divine,
A dismal gloom is thrown o'er every line.
Winds as they blow, long trains of terror spread,
Frill'd caps and gown-tails flap against my head!
My path-way's stopt—to find the track is puzzling—
I'm clasp'd by calicoe, or wrapt in muslin!
Walking, I stoop to 'scape the flying evils,
Where long-prong'd sticks stand up like forked devils!
Each holly-bush, tall shrub, or painted post,
A pallid spectre seems or green-eyed ghost!

From boughs suspended, bodied gowns I see,
As if a *Bateman* hung on every tree!

My house once more I enter—all annoys,
Throwing, as 'twere wet blankets, o'er my joys:
I dare not speak—am told the work it hinders—
To lend a hand were but to *burn my fingers.*
Tormented thus, of life itself I tire,
Plagued with so many *irons in the fire!*

In this little peem I mention a Mr. Bateman. This gentleman, a pattern to all true lovers—suspended himself from the bough of a tree, in the garden belonging to the young lady who was the object of his passion. ——Mr. Bateman's biographers differ in one respect: Some say that he committed the rash act at the *chamber door* of his mistress, and others, that he hung himself on a *cherry-tree!* now a third party (the commentators) start an idea, which is probably the truth, as it reconciles both the former accounts; and which is. That the unfortunate Mr. Bateman hung himself *twice;* once at the chamber door, and secondly on an apple-tree!—They go so far as to add (but whether true or not we cannot say) that the particular tree on which he hung himself, bore that species of fruit called the *Apple-John;* and that it derived its name from this circumstance; for, on consulting the parish registar, it is found that his christian name was *John*, the son of *Joannes* Bateman. Thus it appears, that to the fate of Mr. John Bateman we owe the denomination of that delicious fruit called the Apple-*John!* a fruit, of which the lady

in question was very fond. But to proceed: In the first instance, when Mr. Bateman suspended himself at the chamber door, the noise very naturally alarmed the lady; who, coming out in time, cut him down with her scissars, which she happened just then to be using, her left hand being thrust into a silk stocking, with a new Whitechapel needle stuck therein.—This peculiar incident was categorically noticed at the coroner's inquest, and considered of *very material* consequence:—The lady however not relaxing in her cruelty, Mr. Bateman's "tragic job" was the next day completed in the orchard!

There is no doubt but the account here given is the true one; and the reason why it has been hitherto suppressed, is, because it reflects hardly upon the lady, and perhaps is the only part of her conduct that is reprehensible; for, say what we will, if she did not mean to give his passion a suitable return, why did she feed him with hopes even to the last?—for was not this feeding him with hopes?—false hopes?—Let any lover imagine himself hung up in the same manner and thus cut down by the fair hand of his mistress!—on reviving, would not *hope* be the first thing he would catch hold of?—would not he naturally say to himself, Ah! she *wishes* me to live!—she has indeed *saved* my life! and *consequently* means to make me happy!—Alas! alas! Mr. Bateman (like *most* lovers) *argued* wrongly! Poor dear man! He remains a memorable example of ill-fated love, and his mistress a remarkable instance of implacable cruelty!—Mr. Bateman was not a frivolous *every day* lover; but such a one as all *moderate*

minded young ladies would wish for! His was real affection! no mimicking, make-belief, counterfeit passion; but downright, doleful, deep, desponding, pensive, pining, poring, solemn, sighing, sobbing, serious, sentimentality!!

> *"He who hangs or knocks out his brains,*
> *"The devil's in him if he feigns!"*

But to my narrative again—

I was in London at the time Mr. John Palmer first opened the Royalty Theatre: I had been several times to see it while building. The first performance was "As you like it!" From the opposition raised against it by the Patentees of the other Theatres, the regular Drama was here prohibited, and soon after the house was opened for the performance of such pieces as Burlettas, Pantomimes, &c. which were supposed not to be within reach of the prescriptive powers of the winter managers.

This opinion always struck me (though no lawyer) as a mere fallacy; it has prevailed for years, and its effects even at the present time are not wholly exploded.

A pamphlet was published by me many years ago, in which I stated that if such a prescription were Patentee-law, it must be very illogical and inconclusive, not to say most ridiculous! What would be the reasoning on the subject, if carried on to its consequences? Why thus—That Shakspeare's Hamlet might *legally* play upon the pipe he exhibits, but if he should dare

to reason on it, would then be *liable* to be sent to prison! Equally wise are many other of the doctrines maintained on the subject of Theatres. I here allude to those illusive and most miraculous notions that seem to influence legal understandings as to musical, or unmusical noises, technically called *accompaniments*.

Thus, at the minor Theatres the Actors were supposed to be amenable to the laws, if they spoke properly and plainly; but they escaped all penalty if accompanied by a *Jew's-harp*, a *Hurdy-gurdy* or a *Penny-whistle*, a *Brass-drum*, or a *Brass-pot-lid!* or any other agreeable *musical instrument!!* It is true these *wise* notions as to what was *Theatrically legal*, are in a certain degree exploded or not acted upon, and we now speak of them only as things that were!

It was the mention of the Royalty Theatre that suggested this subject. Perhaps it may afford a little amusement, and remind old play-goers of what was then the custom, if I here insert a copy of an old Play Bill, which I happen to have kept in my possession ever since the time I witnessed the performance of the pieces advertised.

ROYALTY-THEATRE; near GOODMAN'S FIELDS.

Open every evening during the summer with a variety of entertainments.

ON WEDNESDAY AUGUST 22, 1787,

Will be presented a new Musical Entertainment (8th time) called

THOMAS and SUSAN,

Or, the Fortunate Tar.

Incidents, partly compiled. A medley Overture, new Songs, and Accompanyments. Composed by Mr. Reeve.

The principal characters by Mr. Bannister, Mr Follett, and Mr. W. Palmer and Mrs. Fox.

END OF WHICH

A favorite Song by Mr. Leoni, being his first appearance on this Stage.

AFTER WHICH

Mr. Lee Lewes will recite several Comic Subjects from the

LECTURE ON HEADS.

End of the Lecture, a Musical Entertainment, called

THE CATCH CLUB.

IN WHICH

Will be introduced the favorite Anacreontic Song, by Mr. Bannister.

This Evening the Catches and Glees will be varied, and a New Catch, composed by Mr. Carter.

THE VOCAL PARTS BY

Mr. Palmer, Mr. Leoni, Mr. W. Palmer, Mr. Arrowsmith, Mr. Gaudry, Mr. Hudson, Mr. Chambers, Master Braham, Mr. Dorion, and Mr. Bannister.

TO WHICH WILL BE ADDED,

A Favorite Song by Master Braham, by the particular desire of several Persons of fashion.

The whole to conclude with (the 9th. time)

A NEW, GRAND, TRAGI-COMIC, PANTOMIMIC ENTERTAINMENT, CALLED

DON JUAN,

OR THE LIBERTINE DESTROYED;

Don Juan, by Mr. Palmer, Commandant, by Mr. Hudson,
Scaramouch, by Mr. Delpini
Donna Anna, Mrs. Fox, Fishiewomen, &c.

Doors open at Six and begin precisely at Seven.

Boxes, 5s.—Pit, 3s.—First Gallery, 2s.—Second Gallery, 1s.

Some of the Performers named in the above bill, I had seen before, particularly Mr. and Mrs. Hudson; she was, a few years previous, a great favorite at Nottingham, and most deservedly so, being certainly a very good Actress.

I had been favored by a short and accidental interview with Mr. Shatford, while he was in London, at the opening of the Royalty, but as he perceived that I was inexperienced he did not engage me. Some few weeks afterwards I saw Mr. Hudson, and intimated to him my intention of returning into Nottinghamshire, if I could not speedily procure an engagement in some Theatre. He remarked that Mr. Shatford whom I had lately seen, had just written to him, saying he should shortly have a vacancy for a *useful* actor, "but" said Mr. Hudson, "I fear you are not sufficiently studied and experienced to suit his purpose." I replied, that as I was going through the town, where the Company was, *(Newport Pagnel)* in my way home, I could make the trial without much additional expence and, if he would oblige me with a letter of introduction, I would, at all events, stay a few days with Mr. Shatford, and he might judge for himself whether I should suit him or not. The letter was given me and in a day or two I left London. When I reached Newport I perceived by Mr. Shatford's looks, that he felt disappointed at Mr. Hudson's sending down a raw recruit instead of a well disciplined and effective man. However after some explanation he was satisfied and became very pleasant and agreeable: we were soon familiar with each other, and he took me with him on a fishing expedition that very afternoon.

I remained in Newport until the conclusion of the season, which I remember was about three weeks; for the company were then going to perform at Huntington races. I may be pardoned, perhaps, if I notice a circumstance that occurred, merely to show what may be done with good health, youthful spirits, and a romantically ardent mind.

Mr. and Mrs. Shatford and myself breakfasted together, after which they set off in a post-chaise for Huntington: I intimating that I should soon follow by hook or by crook. They had a young female with them.

Mr. Shatford had given me (at my request) three parts to study; namely,—*Courtall* (in the "*Belles' Stratagem*" *Charles Euston* in "*I'll tell you what!*" and *Horatio* in the tragedy of "*Hamlet!*" As soon as I had settled my little account at the Inn, I commenced my journey, and proceeded for at least twenty miles without once thinking of either eating or drinking! so much was my mind occupied with what I had already done, what I was studying to do, and the prospect of acting and participating in the pleasure derived from the brilliant stage-prospects before me! Thus I walked on briskly! reading, spouting and singing, until sunset. I bought as I passed through a village two half-penny loaves (they were then as big as penny ones are now); seeing a girl milking her cows in a field by the road side, I asked her for a little milk: she said I was *welcome* to take whatever I chose. I took her at her word, drank some milk and snatched a kiss with it! I saw at a distance a country boy approaching: I shook hands with the girl, took another kiss, and parted.

This little adventure raised my spirits and infused as it were quicksilver into my heels, and I trudged on with renovated strength. The moon now appeared from behind a shadowing cloud; it was a calm delightful evening! I still continued walking and meditating. I found myself nearly perfect in all my parts—so much so, that by the aid of the pale light which the moon afforded, I was able to repeat the whole of them literally and without omitting a syllable.

What places and towns I passed through I cannot say, further than that I stayed about half an hour over a cup of tea at Bedford: but again I trudged on gaily and merrily as before; the redness of the eastern sky gave goodly token of the approaching morning; the glorious orb of day arose and shone with unspeakable splendour. I soon perceived symptoms of a town at some distance before me, and on inquiry found that it was Huntington. I met a gentleman on horseback; a commercial traveller; he directed me to the Inn from whence he came, saying none of the family were stirring but the *ostler*, and I should find him in the stable. I went accordingly but found no one moving, so I got into the *hay-loft* and slept for about an hour. At half-past six I heard the ostler talking to his horses: I went down and told him who I was, and inquired about Mr. Shatford. "Oh (said he) I suppose you mean the gentleman who came in rather late last night: he is, I believe, at our house, but none of the family are yet up. If you want a bed though, I can show you one:" I thanked him. Before going to rest I perceived under a shed some symptoms of Theatri-

cal property—a few scenes, boxes, &c., and he pointed to the Theatre! I looked at it for a minute and was shewn up stairs to a bed, I rested until about nine o'clock, when I arose, went into the bar, ordered breakfast and took up a newspaper: about half-past ten Mr. Shatford came down stairs, looking as if still much exhausted with the fatigue of riding in a post-chaise so many miles on the preceding day. He began by asking me how I came, and all the particulars of my journey. I narrated them in the manner here stated, and informed him that though I had walked every inch of the way, and was told that by the road I came it was upwards of forty miles; yet, after the rest I had just taken, I did not feel the least fatigued. He seemed surprised when I added that the whole of my expences from *Newport Pagnel to Huntington* amounted to no more than three shillings and eight-pence. I well remember his looks on hearing what I said. He stared—gave an expressive roll with his eyes —coughed aloud, and then turned the conversation. Several months passed away before he ventured to tell me his sentiments on that occasion. "Good God," (he thought) "What will society come to! Here is a young man, a novice, of manners so very simple, that I heard all he said as truth; and now this very innocent seeming youth, though not more than a month old as an Actor, has just told me such a string of lies as never disgraced the lips of a veteran impostor. Such was his conviction at the moment, and he afterwards frequently assured me that many weeks passed before I again recevered my place in his opinion. I

need not say that no man on earth ever had a better knowledge of character than my friend Shatford. On my reaching Huntington I soon found that the well-known Actor, Mr. Swendal, was engaged for the races. He had played Adam at the Royalty, when Mr. Shatford performed Oliver in "As you like it!" Swendal was a sterling Actor, in parts of weight and consequence for which his figure was well adapted. He married the daughter of Charles Bannister, and I was acquainted with him, several years afterwards, in London, Brighton, and Birmingham.

We soon after removed to St. Ives, which I thought a pleasant town: I was shown an old fashioned hall-house where Oliver Cromwell formerly lived, and of course the sight of it gave birth to numerous thoughts which recalled various reflections on the political events in which he was deeply concerned.

Mr. Shatford soon after this took his company to Bedford where we remained till Christmas. I brought forward here a one act piece of my own, founded on the personification of the cards. Spadille was the hero, and Pam the chief comic character! It opened with the chorus as in Midas—

> When our Monarch Spade-ace
> His Throne deigns to grace,
> No Mayor with his Mace,
> Looks so big, &c. &c.

This verse is nearly all I remember of it, and what became of the manuscript I cannot tell: perhaps it flew up to the stars, where (as Pope has told us) ladies sighs and lovers' brains all fly together!

During the holidays some private Theatricals were got up by the nobility at the seat of the Earl of Upper-Ossory, near Ampthill; and a request was made to us, that they might be favored with the use of a few of our scenes, books, and dresses.

Mr. Shatford being at the time in London, I was deputed by Mrs. Shatford, to go over in order to make the necessary arrangements. I remember seeing the performances. The Pieces were "the Critic" and "High life below stairs!" I forget who performed Puff, but I well remember seeing Lord Ossory in the part of the governor; and the present Lord Holland (then very young) was truly excellent in the part he performed.

I believe it was during a romantic ramble near this place, that I composed these little poems for which I entreat the patience and good will of the reader.

REFINEMENT.

Hearts most refined and souls most pure
The best sensations know;
But do they not at times endure
A greater share of woe?

The fairest flowers are first annoy'd
And soonest feel decay;
So fairest maids are first decoy'd
And soonest fade away!

The sweetest hours the fleetest are;
Sad moments slowly move.
The shortest joys are happiest far;
Ah, witness those of love!

SUPPOSED REPLY

TO THE FOREGOING.

The Muse perhaps in these remarks is erring—
Short joys, tho' *sweet*, are not the *happiest* known;
Each heart can witness what I'm now averring—
Regret too oft succeeds when joy is flown!

Protracted joy augments a lover's blisses;
His hopes and his felicities increase
When joy is multiplied by added kisses,
Which sweeten life, till life itself doth cease.

I find also the following epigrams in my manuscripts, bearing the date of the period on which I am at present speaking.

SOMETHING.

Is there not something, heavenly bright,
Beyond all others in delight,
A pulse, so exquisitely nice,
It ne'er was known to vibrate twice;

But felt, it soothes pain's keenest smart,
And warms to ecstacy the heart;
Lost while we glean the joys of sense,
What Wisdom's self can't recompense;
Not life's best treasure, a good name,
Nor that more dazzling object, fame?—
The smile of those who're great and wise,
This something's place but ill supplies!
Grant all we've wish'd, from first to last,
We still lament this something past,
Mysterious void!—tho' memory feigns,
This joy but as a dream remains!
Say, Youth, can'st thou this something prove?
Thou can'st—if thou has felt TRUE LOVE.

GAMBLING.

A RUIN'D Gamester once foul play had shown,
And, from a second-story-window thrown,
Ask'd Will's advice!—The case, said Will, is plain;
Observe this rule—don't play *so high* again!

From the same little volume of manuscripts, I may be excused perhaps, for extracting the following, which was suggested to me by the woeful countenances of an army of tenants, who used to excite my attention at these stated periods in the office of the steward of a gentleman of great wealth, in the town in which I was performing.

QUARTER DAY.

In battle's heat, amid ensanguin'd slaughter,
E'en victory's course is stopt by "*Quarter! Quarter!*"
This magic word, with talismanic fear,
And awful dread, arrests th' uplifted spear.
The only dread that gives the brave renown—
The dread, the scorn—to strike a man when down!

Since such the influence of a simple sound,
That raises whole battalions from the ground,
Snatches the hero from an early grave,
And rescues e'en what valour could not save—
Frightful indeed must be the scene, the hour,
When this word "*Quarter*" nerves the arm of power!
When it no longer stays, but swells it higher,
And draws accumulating terrors nigher,
Adding, as 'twere, fresh fuel to the fire!

Such time there is; a time of high control,
That damps the noblest energies of soul!
A day of import, too well understood,
Far more terrific than the field of blood!
A time when cry of "*Quarter*" brings dismay,
Intestine war, domestic broil and fray,
The cry—th' unwelcome cry of—QUARTER DAY!
Tis then, grim catchpoles stalk throughout the land!
Then legions of blue devils staring stand!—
Ha! Who is that, in wig of formal cut?—
Oh—Mr. Teazum! pray walk in, sir—but——
'But, what?—I hope you're well prepared to pay;
'I need not tell you this is *Quarter Day.*

'Folks must be punctual;—if you'll settle, so—
'If not—can't call again—shall send John Doe.'

Now shiverings come, and horrid dreams affright!
Shocking by day, most horrible by night!
"To wit,"—the worst wit that a man can deal in—
And hark? what thundering knock is that now pealing?
'A tradesman, sir, that with you fain would speak;'—
I'm not at home, nor shall I be this week.
Eh! what?—*a Bill of Sale?*—my things appraised?
Ha! who is that, as in a pulpit raised?
The chairs and tables move, the china rattles;
A *going, going*—all my goods and chattels!
My wife's choice silks walk off, a bedgown's brought her;
My wine binns all at once seem fill'd with water!
The curtains, beds and bed-posts too, withdraw,
And swan-down-feather beds are stuffed with straw!

In our *kind* neighbour, Mrs. CURIOUS, drops,
Prying and pertness in her eyes and chops;
'Dear me! good lack! alarmed at such a clatter,
'I've just stept in: Do tell me—What's the matter?
Matter! (says I) and from her turn away,
Matter enough I think—'Tis *Quarter Day!*

While in my parlour to and fro I'm bouncing,
A messenger arrives, this news announcing—
'Gripus sends word—since you indulgence claim,
'He'll stay proceedings, if a day you'll name.'
A day!—*The day of judgment* then, I roar,
And, as released from peril, slam the door!

Off gallops he, but leaves a bailiff's jobber,
A fellow whom I loath—a knave, a robber!

Again the herald comes!—speaks louder—faster—
'The day of judgment will not suit my master.
'Besides, he says, he shall that day be busy,
'The very thought of *judgment* makes him dizzy'
Zounds!—(with an oath, thus making worse the matter)
If not *that day*—why call then—*the day after!*

Now, on my shoulder, taps I feel, each minute,—
My wife ejaculates 'There's nothing in it.'
Nothing!—see there! the bailiff and his writ!
The frightful parchment!—'Pshaw, tis but a bit—'
A bit!—' of 'cambric, in which work I wrap;
'The writ you see's the pattern of a cap!'
Still *Quarter Day* keeps running in my pate,
And every sound of *quarter* now I hate.
My friend the Colonel—dare not see his face—
He's at head *quarters*, and I shun the place.
Lamb is a dish I choose, whene'er I meet it,
But now, if cut in *quarters*, I can't eat it.
Whate'er reminds of *quarter* I dislike:
I curse the clock because 'twill *quarters* strike.
Nay, e'en at *quartern* loaves I sometimes start,
And faint at beer if brought in by the *quart*.
Small canes, as *quarter*-staffs, my fancy goad,
Forming huge toll-gates on my life's high road.
All avenues they cross—I see them must,
And read, on every bar, the words—NO TRUST.

Throughout Moore's almanacks no evil signs
That rule o'er man—his head, feet, back, and loins;
Trine, Sextile, Quartile, Saturn, Sol, Aquarius,
Mars, Leo, Virgo, Scorpio, Sagittarius,
With Capricorn, and all the Zodiac,
Enough to make a reader's jaw-bones crack;
Not all, in hieroglyphical array,
Bring such dark bodings, such dire ills pourtray,
So ominously black—as QUARTER DAY!

When I was residing near Bristol, I often walked into the city and its neighbourhood, and frequently visited the theatre to see the performances. I was acquainted with several of the company, particularly Mr. Charles Murray and Mr. James Biggs, both clever men. Charles was the Prince of story tellers; and, if permitted, a tale or two, shall be told of him. One day we were both invited to the table of a friend of his, who lived not far from the Theatre. This friend was a gentleman of the name of Wensley, who was then very partial to the Drama, and has since introduced to the public two of his daughters. It will be immediately recollected that a Miss Wensley made her appearance at Covent Garden, a few years since, and I believe was favorably received; she was afterwards engaged at several country Theatres, and by me for a few nights at Taunton; on the evening of her benefit there, she and her sister sung several popular songs and duets.

But we must return to Bristol again. While at Mr. Wensley's table, Mr. Elliston came in and stayed seve-

ral hours; this was the first time I had ever seen that gentleman, except on the stage; he was then rapidly advancing in reputation, and had become a public favorite. He made an excellent *Charles Ratcliffe* in the comedy of "The Jew." He afterwards played Shylock at Covent Garden. Mr. Elliston is so clever a man, that perhaps he never decidedly failed in any part he attempted; but still he is not equally excellent in all. In my opinion I have seen as good *Jews*—his friend Murray for one, but I never saw so excellent a *Charles Ratcliffe*. At that time he looked, spoke and acted the character most admirably.

Mr. Murray was an agreeable and witty companion; I wish to avoid being misunderstood in what I have further to say of him, and his jovial qualifications. He was not a drunkard! he'd too much good sense for that: yet no one loved a cheerful glass of wine better than he did; and no one more amply repaid it with pleasantry, wit, and good humour.

After leaving the party on the evening in question, he requested my company to take a stroll with him through the Bristol Streets; nothing could stay his tongue as we passed along! If he saw a light at a window, he would knock at the door, until it was either opened, or some one answered from within, "Who's there?" "Tis I, don't you know me?" "I can't say I do, sir!" "Where's your Master?" "Just gone to bed, sir" "Bless me, bed!---call him up directly! this gentleman has particular business and must see him!" "No no, said I, we will call again to-morrow:" "Will you leave your names gentlemen"? "Our names! mine is

Anthony Greggams, said Murray, and my friend here, from the country, is called Splash! Good night,---Our compliments to your Master, he shall see us to-morrow, let him get out at least three bottles of his best wine for us; perhaps half a dozen, for we shall bring two or three friends, so don't forget the wine--port or sherry. Good night---best respects to your master---Come along Splash." Then he would pretend to be more tipsey than he really was and staggering drag me onward. By and bye he would knock at several doors---which quickly opened "Is your Master at home?" "No, sir, but he soon will be, I am sitting up for him, expect him every moment. Pray gentlemen walk in and sit down until my Master comes," "No, no; we shall see himto-morrow; only tell him we called and left our compliments---Mr. Splutterman's compliments." "Oh sir, you are joking! said one servant, I knew your voice, Mr. Murray, before you knocked at the door, and that was the reason I was prepared to open it so quickly; your name is not Splutterman." "Well," replied Charles, "who said it was? But I hope you don't pretend to know this gentleman's name better than he knows it himself! Why don't you speak to this young man, friend Splutterman? Tell him who you are, and that your wife, Mrs. Splutterman, is a distant relation,---a cozen of his; once the most respectable owner of half the houses in this street!" "Ay, ay," said I "we'll talk of all these things to-morrow: tis too late to night; so come along my good fellow: let us go home to bed." "Ay, ay, to bed—Remember, John, cozen Sputter's best respects." After saying this, I lugged Charles

away, and got him home as soon as I possibly could, for I was afraid he would be knocking at half the doors he passed.

We had previously formed a party for the next non-play day, to visit a pleasant spot a little beyond Clifton: two or three ladies belonging to the Theatre were to accompany us, and Mrs. Lee too, if her health would permit, had expressed her intention of going; so had Mr. Biggs: at length the time came, and we departed. When we were passing Montague Tavern, I asked one of the ladies, who had often played Juliet, whether she would not halt to pay her respects to her friends and relations---the house of Montague! The ladies laughed, but walked on: Mr. Murray, Mr. Biggs and myself, went in and ordered three glasses of punch, which were quickly made, flavored with Limes, it was indeed of most delicious taste. We then looked at about a dozen fine Turtle, which had not been long imported, and were kept in large tubs of water. We agreed to have a kind of Turtle-feast on some leisure day; but alas, the day never came. A friend of mine a short time afterwards, sent me, from that house, as a present, about two quarts of fine Turtle-soup, whilst I was residing at the city of Wells. We rejoined the ladies, and reached the stated spot, where we were all to drink tea: there is certainly something very pleasant in a tea-party of this kind; while the season remains mild and the spot is in any degree rural, or romantic.

I have already said that these pages will be quite desultory. In pursuance of the statement I now cross the seas in pursuit of adventure. Take the following unconnected anecdotes

On our first going to Guernsey, which, by the bye, was through the influence of a letter from the Duke of Clarence to General Small the governor of the Island: I believe they had known each other, some where in the Atlantic, when the Prince first went into the Navy and the General was serving in America, at the conclusion of the American war. As mentioned in another part of these pages, the General was very partial to the Theatre; indeed he patronized every thing that was liberal.

At the time I am speaking of; now more than thirty years since, Guernsey was quite another place to what it is at present: I allude here chiefly to the narrow lanes and roads in all parts of the Island. There was little travelling except on horseback! By the bye, the country females, coming to market, or riding out for pleasure, used to sit astride their horses, after the fashion of men! nor did it appear so awkward as may be supposed. The stirrup leathers, were very short and their petticoats generally reached below their shoes! I frequently used to ride out with Mrs. Lee, (for we had horses from the Governor whenever we wanted them.) But the roads were so narrow in some places that we were frequently obliged to draw up to let those pass whom we met. I do not recollect ever seeing a gig, or a gentleman's carriage of any kind, during the whole of the time I was on the Island; nor did I ever see any other vehicles, on more than two wheels. But now I understand that the old roads, are greatly widened and many new ones made, and the modes of conveyance of every kind consequently much improved.

At Jersey even then there were better roads, and many genteel conveyances. At low water there was a beautiful ride over the sands, from St. Hilliers to St. Aubin's, and different parties were often to be seen riding about, both in close carriages and gigs, as well as on horseback.

One part of the Island of Jersey is very level and planted out into small fields, with trees of some kind in the hedge-rows, or the whole field covered with apple trees. The roads are pretty good in the summer, but the lanes so intersect each other, or are so much alike, and so numerous, that there is some difficulty in finding your way from one part of the Island to another! There are few persons, even natives, who can be sure of going the nearest way to a spot five miles off, and be certain of coming the same road back again! at least this was the case thirty years ago; whether it is so now, I cannot say. I am speaking of the period during what was called the Choan war. There was a constant communication, chiefly by night, between Jersey and the coast of France.

The most common dress the Choans wore, at least, when in Jersey, was a very dark grey coat, with long skirts in the French style, and a broad leathern belt: in this belt they generally carried a brace of pistols; to each pistol there was attached a bayonet about eight or ten inches in length, which lay upon or beside the ram-rod, but, on pushing the bayonet forward, it was fastened by a spring, and made a very formidable weapon indeed.

I knew two sea-faring Captains who were employed

by the Choans in taking them forward and backward during the night, and it was very interesting to hear them relate their numerous risks and adventures. From one part of the Island, about four or five miles distant from the place where we resided, we could see, without the aid of glasses, the cattle grazing on the French coast and the inhabitants walking about on the shore. I forget the name of the spot where we stood, but I remember that the week afterwards we formed a party to go there again; taking with us some necessary refreshments and several small telescopes for amusement.

There were then on the Island two or three Fencible Regiments: one from the county of Suffolk. I knew several of the officers, particularly Colonel Hockley; if this page should ever meet his eye, I shall be happy to hear from him---He was one of our party at the time. We had not been long at the spot, after having taken our repast, when we heard alarm-guns firing from different out-ports on the Island; we saw signals of several French vessels being in sight! The Colonel was, of course, anxious to get to the command of his regiment, and I was equally desirous of getting to the command of my Falstaff Troop!—for, seriously speaking, previous orders, had been given and proclamations issued that all persons who had in their employ any number of men capable of bearing arms, must have them prepared, and all masters of families, were, in case of alarm, to attend immediately at head-quarters, to take orders from the Governor. We hurried homewards and found the inhabitants placing lights in their windows; such directions having been given in case of alarm!

But, however, in the course of another hour, all was calm again; the vessels were seen steering from the Island, instead of to it; and we had nothing to do but to laugh and retire quietly to bed.

As this made a little bustle, and particularly amongst the military, the next day I gave out for representation a piece which they had warmly patronized before; namely, "Sprigs of Laurel, or The Rival Soldiers!" We had a very good house. In the course of the second *Act* of this piece, the *Printer*, Mr. Mourant, came behind the scenes, and placed something in my hand wrapt in a play-bill: What, said I, is this? A proof of the next night's play-bill?—No, said he, it is a proof of something else! a princely proof of something better! It's money!—What do you mean? "The Prince is so well pleased with your playing Nipperkin, that he desires you to accept his compliments with this trifle!" I opened the paper, and found in it ten new Louis d'ors: they looked as fresh and clean, as if just from the mint. The prince here spoken of was, I believe, a native of the *Island*, but he bore a French title, and was at that time of some rank in the English naval department.

He was generally known as "The Prince de Bouillon." The civil government of the Island lies in what is called "The Royal Court;" the chief of which is the bailiff. This court is similar to the court in Guernsey, and the laws I fancy much the same: both regulated by what is styled the old Norman system; but since they have been under the protection of the English Government, some change I am told has been made in their

institutions. Some of their laws or customs are very arbitrary and remarkably peremptory, and I have reason to think that such laws are necessary in such places; for, if framed otherwise, persons would leave the Island before the laws could be put in force.

An anecdote or two may explain this. A dashing buck, I forget his name, passed as a CAPTAIN and made himself very agreeable while at Guernsey to several of my performers: and, to render himself still more so, he invited them all to supper, at an Inn just opposite the Theatre, kept by a person of the name of Thompson. Almost all the performers attended: that is, all the male performers. The ladies of course did not accept the invitation, nor did I, in the first instance, but, not finding me there he sent me a polite note and I attended. A handsome supper was provided, plenty of wine, punch and other liquors, and the whole evening passed very pleasantly. After this joyous feasting, the very pleasant Captain took no notice of the landlord's bill, but hastened on board some vessel, and left that and many other bills unsettled: we did not know even which way he went! The landlord came to me and asked what was to be done? I told him that he knew the circumstances, and that I was absolutely pressed into the Captain's company; but with regard to my performers I was sure that there was not a single one of them but would pay their respective share of the bill, or I would do it for them. The landlord was satisfied; and added that if he had known this Captain Buck, or Buck Captain's intentions only five minutes before he left the harbour, he could and would have

stopped him; the laws of the Island would have authorised him so to do. From this circumstance I saw the necessity of summary laws, for places situated like Guernsey and Jersey. Severe as the laws thus are, yet they are not in certain cases quite enough so, especially as they affect Theatres!—A Manager is occasionally so circumstanced, as to be under the necessity of acting in a very arbitrary way. He is obliged to play the despot, in order to be able to play at all! he has such various humours and tempers to struggle with! he has, as the poet Rowe expresses it

> "——Business to employ an Age
> "And but a moment's time to get it done in!"

consequently he must not stay to speak before he acts! No, he must act first and speak afterwards. It might be supposed that, in the very formation of the word manager, a theatrical sense was meant to be implied. AGIR is the French verb, "To act"—therefore the two words united, *man and agir*, give us a man to act, or if you please—Manager.

It should also be observed that, though these Islands have many local particulars and characteristic *differences*, yet such minute considerations are not within the scope of my present design. I only aim at a general outline of things, and leave to others the task of explaining them more accurately.

My occasional stories, and trifling anecdotes, are given as not directly connected with my history, but, by way of amusement, as well as to afford some idea of the places and people I have seen. I have endeavored also to be particularly descriptive of the customs, habits

and manners, prevalent in all Theatrical communities and more especially in Provincial ones. Before we leave Guernsey and Jersey, it ought to be noticed that wine and all kinds of spirituous liquors were at that time very cheap in both Islands. In other words, most of those articles deemed luxuries for their being highly taxed in England, were there to be had at a low price on account of the duty being evaded. Apropos! I do not know whether the word duty has ever been thus noticed, yet there is "Magic in the web of it!" Every body will admit that there is something offensive in the word tax; nobody likes to be taxed with doing wrong, or charged with the commission of any crime. The word *impost* is quite as unpleasant; for who would wish to be imposed upon? while, on the other hand, there is not a gentleman or man of honor who would not cheerfully do his duty, by paying what is just and commendable. But to proceed—with respect to both the Islands, as taxes were disliked and duties readily discharged, so we often found, as Englishmen, that in proportion as luxuries were common, so *necessaries* became the greatest of all luxuries! This is a subject worthy the attention of all who bear sway, not only there, but in other places. The best port wine and sherry might then be had for a shilling a bottle; and like the baker's bread, thirteen to the dozen. But not liquors only were to be had on easy terms, many other articles were daily smuggled from the French Coast: and there were no qualms of conscience afloat; no polite scruples or political reserve: smuggling was all the fashion. Now for another little anecdote already hinted at.

As I was walking one day on an elevated piece of ground overlooking the Bay and Pier, (by the bye, I am told that on this very spot various buildings with a garrison, or barracks, have since been erected); I perceived two or three boats, and another vessel somewhat larger, approaching the shore. I was told that the largest vessel was a Yacht, belonging to the Dutchess of Manchester; but, whether true or not, I cannot even at this time say. The whole of the party I was informed, went up to Head Quarters, the house where the Military Governor, General Gordon resided. It was soon diffused through the town that the Dutchess and her whole party of friends were coming to the play that evening. This made me rather anxious that every thing at the Theatre should be done as respectably as possible; I sent my stage-keeper with my compliments to some of my performers, who I heard were merry-making at an Hotel, requesting they would attend early, as I expected to see in the boxes a very large party of the first rank and consequence. In the course of half an hour, the stage-keeper returned with a note in his hand: while I was opening it, I perceived him smiling, and said "Well Tom did you see any of 'em?" "Oh yes, master, I think they be getting on pretty tightish!" "What do you mean, getting drunk!" "In a fair way for't sir, if they keep on as they begin; the bottle is going round briskly." I now opened my *note* and read "Captain———(I forget his real name) "Captain Dash's compliments to the manager of the Theatre and he is desired to say that the Dutchess being much fatigued with having remained so long on board

her Yacht, cannot conveniently attend the performances this evening, but will patronize the same pieces to morrow, if the manager thinks proper. Should this intimation be complied with, the manager may put the Dutchess's name down in the box-book, for at least twenty places!"--I looked at Tom, and said—"Who gave you this? I am afraid it is a hoax!"--"I'll be hang'd sir, if I was not thinking so! for the gentleman could not help smiling when he put the note into my hand!"—"No matter said I, do you know Monsieur—the Commissaire? go to him with my compliments, and I shall consider myself obliged if he will come to speak to me as soon as convenient, the sooner the better." I set off and I began to study some kind of hoax in revenge for the trick they intended to play upon me. The Commissaire came as desired; I related the circumstances, and added that what was intended by this Capt. Dash for a hoax, would, I had reason to believe, prove a reality: for I had seen the two Aid-de-camps at Head Quarters, and they were using their endeavours to prevail on the Dutchess to patronize the next night's performance, which in fact she had partly consented to do, for a message came to that effect, before I had finished talking to the Commissaire. He readily consented to assist me in obtaining my share of the joke! He asked me what the two individuals I had named were indebted to me? what they owed me? "Nothing" I replied, "but their services;—But if they don't do their duty by performing on this occasion, I shall be a considerable loser."—"Oh!" said he "I understand you, sir, you want to secure their per-

forming for you to-morrow night: what reason have you to doubt them?" "I do not suspect that they have the least intention of injuring me or disappointing the public; but the wine,—the WINE sir, which they are so freely drinking will incapacitate them from doing themselves credit or me justice: I want to see them look over their respective parts to night, with as clear a head as possible, that they may display their abilities to better advantage to-morrow. Nothing can make them do this, like terror. I would have them believe that I am offended at their conduct; for, at this moment, they do not know but that they are wanted to play to night: they are drinking now when they ought to be studying their parts, for I know some of them have never yet read them over or even seen the book! I am consequently alarmed, lest they should, by drinking, disgrace themselves and incur the displeasure of the public, which at present is so favorably inclined to give us their liberal support. Besides you must be aware that there are on all occasions, in every town, persons who think it a mighty good joke to disappoint an audience, by throwing difficulties in the way of their performing the pieces advertised, and substituting something else; and I confess I suspect this Captain Dash to be a gentleman of this sort, but it is prudent to avoid charges, lest they should be productive of riot or displeasure; and therefore, Monsieur Commissaire, I will thank you to take your staff of office, or go in the most formidable array which your office will authorize you to assume, and bring the two who have shown the strongest symptoms of insubordination,—I mean Messrs. Pal-

mer Fisher and Kent, to your own house, or to whatever place you please, and I will meet you, and try to adjust matters in as mild a way as possible. I am not the least offended with any of them: only, I fear, (indeed I am certain,) that if they are not kept in good train to day, to-morrow will be too late to think of it. Sobriety is absolutely necessary on the first day, and during the time of study, till the words are completely your own; after that the performance may at times be assisted by a cheerful glass or two! But more than two glasses would be much worse than none at all!"

Thus instructed, the Commissaire set off to execute his office in the manner which to him appeared most advisable. I had sufficient knowledge of him before, to feel assured that he would act his part well, and do his best to effect the object we had in view; for I had before discovered him to be a person of considerable humour and intelligence. He termed my demand—"*Une dette par anticipation.*" I thought it a good phrase, and had it introduced. In the course of half an hour I was sent for to the house of the Commissaire; he had got the two Performers in his custody; and to keep them in good humour, had asked them to drink with him, in as friendly a way as possible: but they refused doing so, and were very grand, very indignant, and as soon as I appeared they were still more so; in fact, they were very much intoxicated at the time; and I only requested them to think of the consequences of leading astray the young ones, whom their example encouraged, instead of having operated towards keeping them sober. Here, I was interrupted by my Tragedy

Here who turned to the Commissaire and exclaimed with a commanding voice, "Officer do your duty!" So off they were marched to the town prison. On their leaving me I observed privately to the Commissaire, "You'll understand Monsieur, that their going to prison is their own fault, I have no charge against them—I only want them to come and do their duty at the Theatre. We have a rehearsal to night - the performance is put off until to-morrow. None of them yet know of this change, therefore, they are blameable for taking so much wine; but, if you can bring them to a proper sense of the respect they owe to the public, set them at liberty, and I shall be inclined to overlook what has passed." After giving me a few haughty looks and high tragedy struts, to prison they were taken. The following report was made to me afterwards by the Commissaire. He could do nothing by talking to the two rebellious chiefs, they only answered as before, with "Officer do your duty!" The key of the prison door was soon turned upon them: the Commissaire remained in the jailor's parlour, and gave him the following instructions.

First. A bundle of straw was taken in, and laid in one corner of the room, with a couple of small blankets, an old broken plate, with two slices of brown bread, then a large jug of cold water, with a rusty tin can which held about half a pint; two small clumps of wood to answer the purpose of seats: and lastly, an old fashioned French "*Chaise de Nuit.*" Having done this, the jailor very politely said "Gentlemen, I shall not go to bed this half hour, if you want any thing more,

give a loud knock or two with that stone, and I will come to you; if not "*bon soir*" I wish you a good night. Saying this, he shut to the heavy old door, which grated on its hinges, locked the chain across it, on the outside, taking care to make it rattle! then might be seen the blunt ugly ends of two iron bolts which shot into staples fastened within the grooves of the stone wall; this was like running the ends of two kitchen pokers between one's ribs and heart. Silence ensued, for, at least ten minutes, and then something worse than even midnight meditations! Thirst came, and nothing but water---cold water---to quench it! At length, becoming quite impatient, they gave a loud knock with the stone left them to make signals with; and a still louder call for the jailor!—Up—or rather down the jailor came; "What's the matter gentlemen?" "Matter," said one of them (Mr. Kent) "Is this Turkey or Algiers? are we to be kept in this vile dungeon until we are starved to death?" "No sir" said the jailor, "I'll bring you more bread and water if you want it! the Commissaire is still in my parlour, and he says you may have as much bread and water as you please!" "Desire him to step this way" (said Palmer Fisher): After a short pause—he continued—Oh I hear him coming—"Mr. Commissaire, what is to be done? "I begin to think this a very foolish business! Come, friend Kent, don't persevere in what is wrong; you know we ought to have kept sober when going on the stage: suppose we send to the Manager, and say we will do as he desires us!" "Well," said Mr. Kent, after a little grumbling, "Well,—do as you please; I

too begin to think it very foolish!" The Commissaire having overheard the conversation passing, spoke to them in a friendly way, ordered the prison door to be opened, and, at his request, in a short time they all came to the Theatre. Palmer Fisher brought Kent under his arm, singing, in a careless manner, the first line of a duet in the farce we were in the habit of acting, called "*Go to your duty, go!*" They smiled---I shook hands with them, and said, "as you have consented to play, I have now the pleasure of informing you that the performance is postponed till to-morrow evening; your ducks and green peas are preparing for you at the Hotel, and you have only to enjoy yourselves until midnight, then go home and be ready for the rehearsal at ten o'clock to-morrow morning."

I shall conclude this chapter with two or three more specimens of my Rhythmical effusions, for the most part composed during my residence in these Islands.

First for an amatory attempt—the *type* of my own sentimental character,

---

BELLES LETTRES.

Lovely Jemima is a *book* of bliss—
Her *word* a *page!* a *volume* in her kiss!
Her looks the *frontispiece*—(a *proof impression*!)
Her wit the *preface*, void of vague *digression*.
Her smile a *literal beauty*. When she's vex'd
Her frown—a pointed *note* upon the *text*.

By Hymen *bound*, I prize the precious lore,
Peruse it daily—every *leaf* turn o'er.
The more I *read*, more loath I from it part,
Resolved the whole *contents to* get by heart!
Catching its spirit, charm'd with its address,
I hail, with joy, the *freedom of the* PRESS!

The following is in a somewhat similar strain

ROSES.

Cupid once crept where Flora lay,
And slyly bore a kiss away;
Then, blushing at the theft, he chose
Concealment in an opening rose;
This rose, obtain'd by Love's fair mother,
Produced another, and another!
A sweet abode then Flora made,
And round it form'd a woodbine shade:
There Love with Beauty still reposes;
There kisses multiply with roses;
And during passion's pleasant weather,
The rose and woodbine twine together!

An epigram will perhaps be excused to diversify the entertainment and sustain the motley character of these volumes.

PARADOX.

Bail is a Lawyer; poor; his practice great;
Pinch has no practice, but a large estate.
A greater problem in this case involved
Than Locke ere reason'd on, or Euclid solved!
The man that's *poor*, the law the most respects;
And he that's *rich*, law totally rejects;
EFFECTS no *causes* here,—there *causes* no EFFECTS!

Now for something lyrical,

SIMPLICITY.

Tell me, says Sue, why Love is drawn a boy?
" Because, my dear, he's innocent and coy!"
And why an archer?—" Ah, need that reply,
" E'en while his shafts are darting from thine eye?"
Wherefore unrobed?—" Nay, Sue, can that surprise!
" Love scorns deceit, and dress he deems disguise!"
But why with wings?—" Because he's airy—gay—
" Here with a thought! and, slighted, flies away!
" Love has so pure, so exquisite a sense,
" He can't endure the shadow of offence!"
But tell me, for what reason pictured blind?
" Because Love shuns the light to speak his mind,
" And, even then, oft blushes to be kind."

To conclude these trifles, and my third chapter, take the following.

MAKING LOVE.

What's *making* love? (says Jane)—What can it mean?
Pray, Charles, can *you* make love?—I'm now sixteen;
Errors I make—make curtsies—make amends;
Make samplers, tippets, and make bosom friends;
But as to *making love*, I really doubt it;
At least, I know not how to set about it.
Is love an *art*, or what men *business* call?
I've no idea how love's made at all!

Ah, charming girl, (cries Charles), that kind confession
Bespeaks a stock of love in your possession;
No matter, therefore, whether *craft* or *trade*,
For both of us have love already made.

Love is no *science*, by no *art* is shown,
But the most sweet profession ever known.
'Tis Life's great wealth!—Felicity's account!
CUPID AND Co. are rich beyond amount;
Suppose we contract form—take credit thence,
And as one firm a partnership commence.
But Charles, suppose my folly raise a debt,
And we're both bankrupted in Love's gazette?
Nay, Jane, you're now too scrupulously nice;
As you're unskilled, rely on my advice.
In Hymen's Ledger I'll fair statement make you,
And, formally, a *sleeping partner* take you!

CHAPTER IV.

"There is a tide in the affairs of Man
"Which taken at the flood leads on to Fortune?"

These lines have been often quoted, and they are produced now, merely to confirm the remark, that many of the principal actions and incidents of our lives, originate in seeming trifles, and that the most important events in which we are interested, are often influenced by matters as uncertain as the turn of a die; and at the periods when they occur, frequently revolve on points or pivots, that are scarcely perceptible! To me at least, this is at times pleasing food for contemplation, and most certainly an innocent and lasting source of amusement, as well as a very effective method of perfecting the judgment and thereby adding considerably to the highest blessings of our existence!

Whenever I look back for thirty, forty, or fifty years, and consider the long list of early associates, old friends, and former acquaintance! I heave a sigh for those I have lost,—those who are dead, or have been unfortunate; and my heart beats with pleasure when I hear of the health and welfare of all those whom I

have long known, esteemed, and well respected. These remarks in the first instance, particularly apply to parents, relatives, and early friends: then follow the alliances and connexions of after years, whose powers encrease with their duration, and finally establish their influence over the heart by the frequent recollection of many former pleasurable sensations! Whenever any place is accidentally recalled to my mind, it suggests to me circumstances that formerly occurred in it. I cannot even take up a map and fix my eye on any particular spot, without a crowd of ideas and associations that bring with them the remembrance of past joys and previous delights.—I have already mentioned the County of Oxford; I remember it well, and, with my fingers on the map, can trace the road that led me to it, as well as the one that took me from it: I remember being delighted with the city itself, and the grand appearance of the churches and colleges.

The well-known *Brush Collins* was there at the time, and I witnessed his performance. I was then on my way to Devizes in Wiltshire: Mr. Shatford was with me. The Theatre there, at the period in question, was rather too small, we soon afterwards built another: near the spot where the Theatre stood, was a garden occupied by a family of the name of Hull, from which garden was a direct communication with the house where they resided. I mention this because at that time their abode was the seat of true old English hospitality, and liberal entertainment. Every night that the Theatre was open, eight, ten, or a dozen of the most respectable gentlemen of the town, were in

the habit of visiting them. The father of this family I never knew, he had been dead several months before our arrival, but he had left behind him the character of a generous and liberal man.—His family, especially his son and the three eldest daughters, inherited their father's liberality: this will soon appear. At an early hour every play night, two tables were regularly spread with refreshments for any friend who might choose to drop in during the evening, either between the acts, or whenever it was most agreeable to them. The tables were generally furnished with good fare; cold beef, lamb or fowls, with excellent ale, porter, brandy, rum, &c. To afford some idea of the degree of liberality and freedom of manners there, I will mention a circumstance which occurred to my old acquaintance Charles Incledon. At that period he belonged to the Bath Theatre, but he had rendered himself popular by his singing at Vauxhall. I engaged him to sing a night or two with us, at Devizes. After his principal songs were over at the Theatre, I invited him to go with me to an adjoining house to take some refreshment: he consented and I, without undeceiving him, introduced him to Mr. Hull's family and the company there assembled. He feasted heartily, drank freely, sang, laughed and chatted. We remained about half an hour, when Incledon rose and pulled out his purse and asked what there was to pay? Nobody heard him but myself and Mr. William Clare, a surgeon. The doctor gave me a wink, and said "Oh as you are a stranger, whatever the bill may be, we shall not let you pay more than three shillings!" Charles threw

down his money and hurried to leave the room. The ladies blushed, and Mr. Hull, addressing himself to Incledon, exclaimed "Damme Sir, what's that for! Do you mean to insult me?" But I instantly took the blame upon myself, and informed them I had promised to take him to the Inn, but instead of the Inn, the doctor had brought us with him, and that we had not explained the matter to Mr. Incledon. I mention this to show the kind-heartedness and friendly manners that prevailed in this truly respectable family. The eldest daughter married a distant relation of her's, a man of good property; the second daughter Lucy, was wedded to a merchant whom I afterwards saw in Guernsey and Jersey; the youngest Anne, was only thirteen years of age when I first knew her: she was a very fine girl, and perhaps a short history of her may awaken some interest in the mind of the reader. This young lady was sent to Paris to finish her education: it was at the period of the revolution, when Madame Tallien and Madame Recamier were considered the leading personages in all the fashionable circles at Paris. This young lady *Miss Anne Hull*, was well introduced into the best Parisian *Coteries*, those of most consequence among the *noblesse*. This was done through the influence of a gentleman then well known in London, Mr. James Perry, formerly the Editor, and afterwards the proprietor, of the Morning Chronicle. That paper was for a great number of years the chief organ of the whig party. Mr. Perry even as far back as Hastings' trial, was on terms of friendship with Fox, Sheridan, and Burke, &c. By an introduction to the family

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as it happened.) The audience were listening with anxious attention! The fiery faced landlord, still trying to force his way up the gallery stairs! The heat, the reeking heat of the upper part of the gallery was almost unbearable. A CAT,—even a CAT—(notwithstanding its nine lives!) could not have lived long in such an exhausted atmosphere. I say exhausted, because there was no vital air, no *oxygen*, left unconsumed within it. As to the crowd at the top of the stairs, life was sustained in them only by the occasional whiffs of pure air that came up from the gallery door-way. But the poor devils puffing and panting for a time, were soon seen widely gasping for breath as fish do when they are first drawn out of the water. In short, the top of the gallery was as offensive, as it would be to blow out a large candle, and immediately hold your nostrils over the smoking wick of it. And it was well for all parties that the state of the air in the gallery, was such as is here described; that there remained in it nothing that contained the chief principles of vitality; it was simply and completely *azot*. Had there still been left in it one inflammable particle, the least jot of *oxygen*, the landlord's face would have set fire to it, and the whole house would have been blown up. It happened otherwise, but in a manner almost as tremendous.

William the ostler not having answered, or appeared to the call, the impatient landlord once more pushed forward his head, and exclaimed "William! Squire! Squire!" This was enough. The whole audience thought he had called "Fire! Fire!" and in a moment

all was confusion and uproar! and then again, to make things worse, if possible,—when the landlord cried out thus—*William* most unfortunately replied "Here, Sir, Here!" This made the people think that the roof was already on fire, and that they should all be burnt alive. The noise,—the confusion, that now ensued, must be conceived,—it cannot be described. The screaming—the scrambling from the gallery down into the boxes,—from the boxes into the pit. Every passage was soon clogged up: and the outward doors being hung on the *inner* side, (by the bye this is a great error in public places) the pressure of the crowd was so powerful, that the said doors could not be opened, nor could any of the people get out that way. Talking to them, or giving advice, was useless in the hurry of escaping from the gallery and upper boxes, they had, by sliding down the posts, broken all the chandeliers and branches of candles; so that they were lost in darkness, while they supposed the roof of the Theatre to be all in a blaze. One thought of this sort might have pacified them: but no,—the darker the place they were in, the more they dreaded the light. The less they saw of danger, the more they feared its consequenees. In short, when they were at the top, they jumped to the bottom; and while on the floor, they feared the burning *roof* more than when their backs were touching it. It is thus consternation and alarm scare away the reasoning faculties of man. At length, however, the hubbub ceased: they found there was no fire to fear, they became convinced that there never had been the least appearance of fire to frighten them. Many seemed

ashamed of having so given way to their fears. Things now took a very different turn: the cause of this terrible mistake was asked for, and investigated. The unfortunate ostler was found, and strictly questioned: some violent people were for kicking him: some laughed at him: others pitied him: but the gods,—the gallery gods,—they had not yet given their irrevocable decree.

So when great Jove his Balance lifts in air,
He weighs Mens' brains—finds something wanting there!

But no matter about brains: when any fun is afloat, it shows a want of brains not to enjoy it.

Now these implacable godships of the upper regions, (having seen out their last twelve-penny worth of the Play) inquired for the rosy-faced culprit, the ostler. He was a bone-ified man:—A Teague:—A Scotchman. His high cheek bones rising, like the rough cliffs near John-a-groat's house: and that huge promontory, his nose, was as ragged as the carbuncled craggy rocks near Bute Castle, a purchase lately made by my friend Kean; and which is, I believe, in the summer time his favorite residence.

I have lately read in the papers that he is there at this moment: methinks I see the rolling, piercing dark eyes of my old friend, looking from the loftiest turrets of his Castle northward. (nobody can see further *north* than he can when he chooses!!) He beholds, (in fancy at least, and in another direction) the Giants' Causeway! Himself in mind a Giant! He hears the minstrelsy of the old Welch Bards, and contemplates their living looks,—their reverend manners, and their flowing beards!

Bringing for a moment his fancy homeward, he hears the foaming surge beating the firm-based rock beneath his feet. With his friends embarked on board his yacht, and cabins richly stowed (like Nautilus, the sail and oars his own) coast-wise, he trips along towards Dunsinane's high towers, where, on the *outward* walls, the cry is still "They come!" Now, anchored, and refreshed, Kean forward looks, as far at Fingal's Cave. Then in idea further north he glances; (for to his eager eye, leagues seem as miles, and miles but steps!) To Baltic seas and stern Sclavonia's wilds he journies on! he brings great Odin,—(military chief and self-established deity!) he brings him onward to Scotland's frowning shores!—With Odin's power his creed and various other superstitions came!—The Raven Banner,—the magic of odd numbers!—The wizard art of something more than wisdom;—the (witchery) of old women! and the sybil force of mystic sorcery, of supernatural strength and rites most cabalistical! These—more than these,—famed Odin! brought to Scotland; and, with the wondrous Edda in his hand, he made laws, and with his sword confirmed them. Hence Scottish Highland Clans retain, 'tis thought, their traits of national bravery, that often lead them on to deeds of arms and chivalrous exploit. But hold! I've wandered far with Kean, perhaps too far! If so, 'tis he alone must check my course, and set me where he stands himself—on nature's firm-fixed basis. Once more to plain and simple narrative we'll now return.

The subject we were upon before this rambling digression, was that of alarm taking place at public

CHAPTER IV.

"There is a tide in the affairs of Man
"Which taken at the flood leads on to Fortune?"

These lines have been often quoted, and they are produced now, merely to confirm the remark, that many of the principal actions and incidents of our lives, originate in seeming trifles, and that the most important events in which we are interested, are often influenced by matters as uncertain as the turn of a die; and at the periods when they occur, frequently revolve on points or pivots, that are scarcely perceptible! To me at least, this is at times pleasing food for contemplation, and most certainly an innocent and lasting source of amusement, as well as a very effective method of perfecting the judgment and thereby adding considerably to the highest blessings of our existence!

Whenever I look back for thirty, forty, or fifty years, and consider the long list of early associates, old friends, and former acquaintance! I heave a sigh for those I have lost,—those who are dead, or have been unfortunate; and my heart beats with pleasure when I hear of the health and welfare of all those whom I

have long known, esteemed, and well respected. These remarks in the first instance, particularly apply to parents, relatives, and early friends: then follow the alliances and connexions of after years, whose powers encrease with their duration, and finally establish their influence over the heart by the frequent recollection of many former pleasurable sensations! Whenever any place is accidentally recalled to my mind, it suggests to me circumstances that formerly occurred in it. I cannot even take up a map and fix my eye on any particular spot, without a crowd of ideas and associations that bring with them the remembrance of past joys and previous delights.—I have already mentioned the County of Oxford; I remember it well, and, with my fingers on the map, can trace the road that led me to it, as well as the one that took me from it: I remember being delighted with the city itself, and the grand appearance of the churches and colleges.

The well-known *Brush Collins* was there at the time, and I witnessed his performance. I was then on my way to Devizes in Wiltshire: Mr. Shatford was with me. The Theatre there, at the period in question, was rather too small, we soon afterwards built another: near the spot where the Theatre stood, was a garden occupied by a family of the name of Hull, from which garden was a direct communication with the house where they resided. I mention this because at that time their abode was the seat of true old English hospitality, and liberal entertainment. Every night that the Theatre was open, eight, ten, or a dozen of the most respectable gentlemen of the town, were in

actress; she rose to the very top of her profession all at once, (that is in one season) and she as suddenly lost the distinguished rank she had gained! Some professional people and men of true taste and sound judgment, have thought that her talents had been over rated, and that time and experience did not justify the expectations that had been formed of her: but with deference it is here submitted that this generally received opinion was not altogether correct. Nobody had better opportunities of ascertaining her talents than we had at Salisbury; and though it is here readily acknowledged, that Moggy Mac Gilpin was her best part, yet she discovered great ability in many other characters. I have seen better *Cowslips*, for she had not that natural simplicity so requisite in the character, yet, by her knowledge of the stage, she sung *Cowslip's* song in a manner most effective. She was very often requested to sing this song between the acts, &c. and never sung it without being encored. How came she then to lose so suddenly the fame and rank she had so deservedly acquired? that is the question: for my own part I attribute her failure to her rudeness, selfishness, avarice, and arrogance. Very harsh words when speaking of a female! but they shall be explained. As to the latter word arrogance, she conducted herself in such a manner as to show she was spoiled by the good opinion of the audience, and she treated the other performers in a manner that made them dislike her: with respect to the word avarice that too shall be explained. Prudence in money matters is highly praiseworthy, both in old and young; but over prudence

(avarice) is disgusting in both cases, more especially when it prevails in youth. The weekly salary of Miss Fontenelle when with me at Salisbury, was two guineas; she received it generally in silver, and after putting the whole into her pocket-handkerchief, she would examine each shilling over and over again, and such as she did not like I often changed without even looking at them; (for I generally paid her myself). She would often go through this process and minutely examine the cash a second or third time, jingling each shilling on the table in so tedious a manner, even when the other performers were waiting for their respective salaries; yet she never apologized, or seemed to care a pin about others waiting; the money was her only consideration. One day she had just got to the street door when she returned with a shilling she did not like: she showed it to the performers, who told her it was a fine Queen Ann's shilling, worn a little smooth, but a very good one; they never saw a better. She replied they were exactly of her opinion, it was a most excellent shilling! a capital one! but she should like one somewhat larger; she did not like a little shilling. Some one of the performers changed it for her and they in future always called her "Miss Little Shilling!" What became of her afterwards I scarcely know. She went with us to Dorchester but did not play there: I think she sailed soon afterwards to America, doubtless under the conviction that their large dollars were much better than English little shillings.

During my first years management at Salisbury, I

received the following letter from Miss Birt, since known to the public as Madame Frederic.

"To Mr. Lee, Manager of the Salisbury Theatre."

Sir,

I have hitherto been engaged at the Italian Opera House: you have doubtless seen my name in the bills and the newspapers: I wish to try my abilities on the English Stage in the Romp line. I am not quite eighteen: a good figure; my face what the men call pretty! I can act, sing, dance, go into small-clothes, and come directly.

Yours,

S. Birt.

P. S. Say the word, and you shall see me down in a twinkling.

In anwer to the preceeding application, I wrote as follows

Madam,

Your letter is brief and candid—mine shall be equally so. As you are a novice, I cannot afford to give you more than a guinea per week; at least not till after trial. You say you can sing, dance, and go into small clothes: so if you please put them on, (those, or any other dress more convenient) and come if you like directly.

Yours,

Henry Lee.

P. S. I have said the word—so expect to see you down, and *twinkling!*

REMARK.

Something prevented this lady coming at that time, but I saw her frequently afterwards in London, Birmingham, Bristol, Taunton, Exeter, &c. and we have often talked and laughed at this romantic correspondence.

Soon after this our first season at Salisbury, we removed to Dorchester. This was in the year 1792. We had the County Hall for a Theatre and a very good one it made. Since the period here spoken of, (exclusive of the County Hall) no less than three different regular Theatres have been built at Dorchester, and chiefly under my directions. The first was erected by a builder of the name of Curme: myself and my partner, Mr. Shatford, held this on lease; and at the expiration of the term, Mr. Curme wanted the place in the way of his business, and I was obliged to provide myself with another. I prevailed on William Henning, Esq. to erect one on his own land; I had it of him for two seasons, and he then applied it to some other purpose. The Theatre at present in Dorchester was built for me about two years ago, by Mr. Charles Curme, the son of the person named above.

Respecting Dorchester, and the present Theatre, more may be said another time. It stands very near a part of the old Roman wall, which formerly surrounded perhaps the whole of the town, at the time when those warlike people, the Romans, held posses-

sion of this Island; Dorchester was one of their principal stations. Many evident signs of its ancient grandeur still remain, particularly several large mounds and barrows on the plains near the town, and most especially a noble embankment called the Roman Ampitheatre! Within this spacious circle (or rather this spacious oval) gladiators used to amuse the ancient British Ladies by their fierce encounters with each other, as well as with wild beasts, &c. These points were alluded to in a prologue which I wrote for the opening of the Theatre.

My first season at Dorchester was in the year of 1792: after which we made a short stay at Bridport, and removed to Lyme and to Sidmouth. At the latter place we had a new Theatre erected in a regular manner, and which we took for a certain term. It was at Lyme that Mr. Woods, Mr. Hatton, and Miss Hinds first joined us. I had known them while at Brighton: of Mr. Woods I shall speak more in another place. The two latter, Mr. Hatton and Miss Hinds, were married at Lyme soon after they came, and they stopped some years in our companies, for we occasionally had two. This season we had but one at Lyme where I was stationed; and the other at Sidmouth which my partner Mr. Shatford conducted. We at times changed about and assisted each other, being about fifteen miles apart. Mr. Hatton was the son-in-law of Mr. Thornton, then well known as the manager of several Theatres at Reading, Gosport, &c. Mr. Hatton was a clever actor in his line; of a bustling spirit; could do any thing—tragedy or comedy; but he

was rather unsteady in his conduct. He was engaged I think two seasons at the Haymarket, and has a son clever in pantomime, still I believe in one of the London Theatres. Mr. Hatton himself died in America; his widow married again, and she is now Mrs. Brooks, an actress of great merit in the Surrey, or some other of the London Theatrical establishments.

But it is now necessary that I here retrace my steps, and resume the thread of my story at the towns where I left it, (namely, Lyme and Sidmouth.) From these towns, then, (and still, I believe,) of some consideration, as fashionable bathing places, we removed to the city of Wells, where we purchased a place and converted it into a Theatre, which still forms a part of this circuit; the company going occasionally to catch the races, and once in two years to perform there during the summer assize. On our being at Wells the first season, we were warmly patronized by the officers of the Somerset Militia, then stationed there. The Earl of Cork, Lord Dungarvon, Captain Barton, and others very frequently attended the Theatre. Several of the officers occasionally went on the stage, and the Honourable David Anstruther played several parts then, and the following seasons. Captain Porch and his brother were both very Theatrical. Captain John Porch nearly forty years ago was determined to go on the stage, but I persuaded him to the contrary. Then (said he) "I'll fight a duel!" Indeed! who will you fight with?—"Curse me (said he) if I know or care a pin who with!—With you or any body!—What do you say!—Will you fight?" "No thank you," (said I).

"Zounds! (he continued) I am tired of an idle life!—I must fight somebody, or do some mad trick or other!" Many years after this I used to dine with him, at his own house and at Colonel Seymour's, and used to laugh at his former pranks, mad fighting fits, &c. We went again to Salisbury, and were again successful: we purchased and rebuilt a Theatre at Devizes, to which place we removed in the spring after finishing at Salisbury. It was at Devizes where Miss S. Keys first joined our company, and whom I afterwards married. Mr. Shatford and myself purchased some ground, and erected a Theatre at Lymington in Hampshire, so as to be ready for the approaching season, it being a watering place. From Devizes I went to Frome, where I stopped until the autumn, when I again went to Wells: Mr. Shatford with his company was at Lymington. During the Bath vacation, we had engaged Mr. J. Durravan and Mr. Charles Murray: the former was a very clever actor, and a great favorite in sprightly fops and youthful low comedy. Mr. Murray has been since known in London at Covent Garden, a very good actor, and a most respectable character. He has been noticed here already and must again at least once more: I cannot omit any story that relates to my old story-telling worthy friend. While at Lymington, the weather warm and he quite thirsty, he had drank at least two quarts of porter during the performance: the play was Wild Oats: he performed the part of Sir George Thunder. He dressed the character well—had on a handsome naval uniform: no one could look, and none could play it better. After the

piece was over he went, without taking off any part of his stage dress, to the chief Inn, near which the Theatre stood, and called for a large glass of cold brandy and water: he bade them take it into the front parlour where Charles opened the door, and seated himself at a table near the middle of the room. The waiter took in the liquor to him and said "Sir I will bring in a candle directly." "Oh never mind a candle." "But the boy is putting up the shutters!" "Very well, just as you like." Charles closed his eyes, and dosed a little! The waiter brought in a candle, set it down and left him still a nodding (as the song has it). Charles opened his eyes to drink and soon perceived the figure of an officer sitting on the other side. "Sir, your good health" said Charles. The figure bowed in return but spoke not: "What! continued Charles, not a word? Perhaps a little deaf! I drank your good health sir! (speaking louder)—Dumb still! Why who the devil are you? You look like a naval officer—therefore a gentleman! but you dont behave like one. Waiter! (Charles rang a bell laying on the table.) "Coming sir! "Why waiter come nearer! who was that fellow came in just now, and placed himself while I dosed on the other side the table? What did he mean by not speaking to me? I did not see any one come into this room sir! but I saw the gentleman who is in the bar with my missis peeping at you through the bar window." Bar window! that window sir; that's the bar window sir, close by the looking-glass! Ay, ay, said Charles I see him, a naval gentleman? "I think he is a naval gentleman, (said the

waiter) and I fancy he is the Captain of the vessel lying at the mouth of our river!" "My best compliments to him waiter, tell him I am partly a sailor myself; I have been in all parts of the Mediterranean and I shall be glad to take a glass of brandy and water with him. Mr. Murray had entirely forgot his having his stage uniform on. The waiter went into the bar and returned in less than a minute: the gentleman's compliments to you, sir, but he has been sent for by a friend at whose house he sleeps; the servant is waiting for him—he is finishing his glass, drinks your good health and hopes to be better acquainted with you to-morrow!—See sir, the gentleman is now standing with his glass in his hand to pledge you; (the waiter pointed in the direction of the bar and looking-glass) "I'm his most obedient," said Charles. Tell the gentleman I drink his good health and hope to be better acquainted with him! Charles bowed in a very formal manner to the looking glass, which of course returned the salute: he never looked into the bar window at all, but the land-lady peeping from the bar window saw Charles bowing to, and talking to himself and the glass: Charles paid his reckoning and gave the waiter a shilling to see him home to his lodgings. The waiter now discovered that all Mr. Murray's discourse and allusions had been between himself and the large looking-glass, and that he had never once glanced at the bar or to the gentleman he supposed sitting there.

But as he got to the door of his lodgings, he observed to the waiter "Whoever that sea-faring stranger is, I mean the one just now in your bar, I shall be happy

to be better acquainted with him! my life on't he's a perfect gentleman; you saw him return my salute? I never, in the whole course of my travels never saw any one bow with so much elegance as he did."

The waiter could hardly refrain from laughing at what had happened, but he kept the laugh to himself, as well as he could; observing "I think sir you make a handsome bow yourself!—" Why yes, replied Charles, perhaps I may, but it is my daily occupation: in my present line of life we are in continual practice of good breeding; but to think that the sea-faring stranger I've just seen who is for ever stooping and walking under deck aboard his vessel, 'tis wonderful he can retain his elasticity of body, and bow with such elegance! well, good night waiter, you say tis not much past twelve, I am glad of it. I love enjoyment, but always sorry the next day when I sit up late; my maxim is, may the evening's recreation always bear the morning's reflection." The waiter at this thinking of the looking glass could not help sporting his joke—"I think sir that your maxim--your toast may be changed thus—"May the reflections of our large looking glass, serve for future recreations!" "Bravo waiter! damme bravo! you are an honest fellow; there's another shilling for you. Bravo! good night! The door was shut, and they parted; exclaiming on each side and on both sides of the door, good night! bravo! bravo! bravo!"

I will now proceed to give a few more specimens of letters and applications which a manager is in the habit of receiving.

Scores of young men and as many young maidens, are so deluded by what they read and see, they become as it were fascinated, or what is commonly called stage struck! They are apt to think acting is so very easy a matter that if finely dressed, like what they see before them, they could themselves shine, as conspicuously as what they behold represented. These ideas working in young and ardent minds produce the effects I am speaking of. I remember being myself under the influence of similar impressions.

I think it was in the year 1792 that I received the following letter, addressed

Messrs. Lee and Shatford, managers of the Theatre, Devizes.

Sirs,

If you have a situation in my line, I shall be glad to know what terms I may expect to receive; I mean what wages you could afford to give me; for I am told that I shall soon make a good hand, that is, in such characters as King Henry VIII., Prince Hamlet, General Othello, Duke of Gloucester, Lord Foppington, Cardinal Wolsey, Squire Richard, or Lord Townly, Captain Cassio (for I am thought very clever in a drunken scene) Captain Macduff and Captain Macheath; but in the latter character Macheath, (as I am no great hand at singing) I cannot do it without a day or two's practice; yet as I have been a little used to psalm singing, I think if you have a hautboy, or a bassoon, or even a fiddle, I shall be able to get on pretty well, especially if it be a great or double bass

fiddle; for a bass fiddle is like my voice very powerful, and will serve to cover any little mistake if I chance to get wrong, but I think I shall keep right, I am not faint-hearted.

Your humble Servant,

CHARLES JACKSON.

OBSERVATION.

As I was more faint-hearted than this Mr. Jackson, I remember telling him that though I often wanted good singers, yet I was sorry to inform him that psalm singers would not do for the stage.

To Messrs. Lee, and Shatford, Managers of the Salisbury Theatre, or Devizes.

Sirs,

If you have a situation in my line,—I mean your vocal apartments,—I shall be glad to know your terms. Perhaps you may like to know my personal and other qualifications. I am a young man,—a good figure,—rather pale,—but am told that by the addition of a little paint, I shall look very well: as to voice and singing, I've oft been informed that I sing some of the cabinet songs quite as well as Mr. Braham. If your "Vocal Apartment" is full, I shall be happy to make myself useful in any other line or apartment that you may please to give me.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

W. D.

The following was my answer.

Sir,

I have no "Vocal Apartments," except my green room and the dressing rooms near it, which at present are all sufficiently supplied. As you say you can paint, and assist in the cabinet line, and are willing to make yourself useful, I should be tempted to give you a trial, if I was sure that you are as fond of work as you seem to be of playing! If you can Bra,—I mean, sing, like Mr. Braham, in a cabinet,—I have a corner cupboard in my dressing room where we generally put a part of the stage wardrobe. If you choose to come and place yourself in any of the "places" or "apartments" here spoken of, you may there exercise your various talents, and if I approve of them, you shall be engaged.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

HENRY LEE.

The foregoing Letters were founded on facts. I afterwards saw this very Mr. W. D. in London: I purposely omit his name, because, though not clever in the vocal or stage department, or in any other "apartments" I found him a very civil good kind of man; and though no actor, a respectable, honest tradesman.

To Messrs. Shatford and Lee.

Gentlemen,

I have seen your names in the newspapers

as being the managers of many different Theatres. There was a company here at Sherborne a little while ago, and I saw them act several plays and entertainments, since then I have read a great many more; I think I should like to be on the stage myself if you will take me.

I cannot expect that you will give me much money at first; but if you like I will come on trial just to show you what I can do. Please to give me a speedy answer, addressed to the post-office, Sherborne.

Yours, &c.

DOLLY ORDER PRIDE.

As the appellation here signed was somewhat singular, I at first took little notice of this letter; but on being told the name was probably a real one, as there was an elderly person called Pride, residing in Sherborne, I wrote Miss Dolly Order Pride the following reply.

Miss Dolly,

I am afraid you are deceiving yourself with respect to your wishing to be on the stage. It is a more difficult undertaking than you can possibly be aware of. Knowing so little of you, and of the requisites you may possess for the stage, I cannot even presume to give you any advice.

However, if you cannot conquer your passion for the stage, you had better speak to your father or mother,

or whatever relations or friends you may have; and if they approve of your coming, I will give you a trial.

I am, Madam,

Yours,

HENRY LEE.

This young person (Miss Dolly) afterwards married an Actor of the name of Worsdale: they were known on the Weymouth stage for several seasons. For some years afterwards they both resided at Sherborne, and were very respectable characters.

Copy of a Letter from a Mr. Aikin, (Son of the Mr. Aikin, of Covent Garden) who was many years the Manager of the Liverpool Theatre.

To Mr. Lee, Theatre, Salisbury.

SIR,

When I was first a member of your Theatres, at Salisbury and other places, I was young, and, at times, very foolish; and because I confessed my faults and promised to mend, you told me that if I persevered in that resolution and paid attention to business, you would again engage me: I remember you added that I must suffer a great deal before I was properly brought to my senses! Now, sir, if suffering be a criterion of sense, I must, by this time, be tolerably sensible, for

few people can have suffered more than I have done, in the same space of time: But on cool reflection, I perceive it has been chiefly my own fault, in not paying proper attention to business instead of rambling carelessly about. And, if you have any kind of vacancy (I don't care of what sort) say the word, and you shall see me down at Salisbury as soon as you please.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

F. AIKIN.

P. S. Direct as before, Russell Street, London.

By way of specimens, here are sufficient proofs of the curious correspondents which country managers are liable to be honored with. I cannot however refrain from giving one more of a most delectable kind.

To Master Henry Lee, Esq. the Manager of the playhouse Theatre, at Taunton Deane.

Sir,

I and my eldest son Thomas, were at Taunton Assizes last spring; we saw one or two of your plays since which time Tom has done nothing but talk about 'em. He thinks he should like to be a player man himself, so if you choose to hire him, I should wish to know what wages you are willing to give. Tom be a cute chap enough, and very useful in the way of my business, which is that of a carpenter and wheelwright;

but, hang the boy, since he took your playing notions into his noddle, he be always staring about, and making believe of stabbing himself and others with chisels and gimlets, which he calls swords and daggers! I am afraid he will hurt somebody; so I would thank you to take him: He won't stick out for very high wages, the first two or three weeks, till he gets very clever.

Your humble Servant,

THOMAS THOMPSON.

Direct to me, to be left at the post-office, Wooten-Underidge.

I am told that a good look and noble figure be the best for the Stages in London.

My son be a fine stout young man; his mother says there be not the like of him in all this part of the country! but that you may judge for yourself I send you his exact admeasurement; and other sort of matters. He be almost 20 years of age—his height five feet nine inches and a half; across the shoulders one foot and three quarters; his head be large, nearly twenty-four inches round; his arms be long and strong and his hands be huge and heavy; his legs be stout and plenty of the calf; his feet, in his new shoes, be eleven inches in length and five and half in breadth; he be a nice modest young man; a little sheepish at first starting; but when well acquainted, he is as bold as a lion.

Having said thus much you may judge whether he is

likely to shine on the Stage; this letter is all his own writing; a good bold hand; only *I* and our *school-master's* son lent him a little help in the way of spelling right the words, and all that sort of business.

For myself, my son, and the school-master's boy,

I remain your's as aforesaid,

T. T.

Now—however strange it may appear, this application was actually made to me very soon after my first going to Taunton, which as already shown, was more than thirty years ago.

But hold—having travelled somewhat out of my regular track, for the purpose of shewing the preceding correspondence, as well as other matters; I must, without ceremony go back to the subject I was previously speaking upon, as well as to the different places where my rambling mode of life conducted me.

It may not be amiss, in order to make other matters more clearly understood, that I mention what follows. My first attempt at dramatic composition, was at about the age of seventeen or eighteen. A friend of mine Mr. Strong, already mentioned, perhaps may remember the circumstance that occurred better than I can: a few sketches of characters that I had written in a small memorandum book, fell in his way without my knowing it; and the remarks made by him and his father, encouraged me to proceed. I have the book still in my

possession, and a stranger might readily gather from it some of the leading features of Caleb Quotem. He was by me originally called Twist, and since that time he has been twisted into many forms and shapes, and found under various denominations.

The readers of modern plays, and the most frequent attendants of the London Theatres, will allow that since Caleb first made his appearance, the stage has been pretty well quotemized by several different authors. Many have adopted the same style of writing, or rather many authors have taken up particular branches of the said character, and have so very cleverly handled those branches that no small quantity of fruit has been gathered from them. But scarcely any of that fruit has fallen to my share; nay as yet I have scarcely tasted even the peeling. So far however from being angry, I have thought it highly complimentary: for if not witty myself, I have been the cause of wit in others, and that alone to me (as with Falstaff) is sufficient consideration. Besides I may be permitted to say of those who have honored me by their notice as above stated, that if we had Horticultural Societies in the dramatic vineyard, the man who could make one branch produce as much fruit as three, would be most deserving of public reward. So if I have drawn out wit from others, it is the next praise to writing wittily myself.

Since I have fallen by accident into this train of thinking, permission it is hoped will be given me for a few remarks that may possibly lead to something useful.

The character of Quotem from being altered has not now an appropriate name. This was noticed by the editor of the monthly mirror, some years before the review appeared. He observed that Quotem as he now stands proper, does not quote! he only tacks an author's name to his own observations, in order to make them seem of more importance. Thus—the fields look green, as Pope says! and your humble servant, as Dryden says! Both these phrases had double meanings as originally used, now they have but one: that one is mock importance. The meaning lost was meant to imply that Pope who wrote pastoral poetry, must like other people have said that the fields at times looked green! and as to the common phrase of your humble servant, as Dryden says (exclusive of its mock importance) the quotation was meant to imply that Dryden was remarkable for the flattery of his dedications, and that to persons whom he could not in his heart respect or admire he very often subscribed himself their most obedient, most devoted and

Very humble servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

Another point or two may now perhaps be observed upon: first, the rapidity of utterance that is required and is indeed essential to the character. Other characters had before been written that were the better for being rapidly delivered, provided that the delivery was sufficiently clear for every syllable to be distinctly

heard. But something more than rapidity, is wanted for Quotem; a snip-snap mode of expression; the omission of every syllable that can well be spared, without destroying the meaning of each sentence. It is somewhat like what I conceive is meant by *Staccato* in music: each word, each syllable, should pop out of the mouth like a pellet from a pop-gun.

As to Caleb's third trait of character, (the many trades) there was no great novelty in that, though more than some persons may imagine; for it was written before Dickey Gossip and others came out; and the pop-gun plan of delivery gets so hastily over the various occupations, as to give an air of novelty to the whole of them. The snip-snap style is what I recommend for matters of fact, and for notes where any notes may be found necessary.

I have now only a few words more to say on the subject of Caleb Quotem. As before observed when I was about nineteen years of age, I wrote this character and called him Twist: soon after coming on the stage and being at Abingdon, in Berkshire, I added sufficient matter to make two acts, and it was there performed: it was next done at Thame in Oxfordshire, then in the course of a few years it was performed at Salisbury, Devizes, Frome and other places. The first title given to my piece, was, "I don't know what!" The next name was "More frightened than hurt!" At last, I twisted Mr. *Twist*, into Caleb Quotem, and finally Mr. Colman quotemized him into what he now is! And instead of his remaining the quizzical Jack-of-all-trades of a country village, he was turned into the

"Wag of Windsor!" and why? For two reasons, because the words Wag and Windsor, each begin with a W! Mr. Colman had too a better reason than this; namely, because there was at that time a Camp at Bagshot Heath, where the King more than once inspected the different Regiments there assembled; therefore the "Review; or Wags of Windsor" were very good titles to catch the attention of all the alliterative, if not literary London critics.

Having related these circumstances, I will now return to the historical part of my Memoirs.

We had offers from Birmingham, Manchester and Liverpool. The Prompter of Covent Garden, Mr. Wild, had spoken of Mrs. Lee in such flattering terms to the then Manager, Mr. Aiken, that he called upon me and offered us the best terms he was in the habit of giving! I thanked him, and said that I was afraid the journey to Liverpool would be too much for her.

Mrs. Lee, had been for several years known to Mr. Hughes and his family, while they resided at Exeter: we engaged with him for Weymouth. We set off as soon as Covent Garden closed; called to see different friends on the road, as we passed through Salisbury, Blandford and Dorchester: we arrived at Weymouth at least three weeks before the Royal family came there. Mrs. Lee played some of her best characters and had become a great favorite with the nobility, &c. This was soon reported at Gloucester House, and the Princesses sent one of their pages for the manager (Mr. Hughes): he was to bring with him a list of all the pieces in which Mrs. Lee performed. The King

commanded for the next night, I forget the pieces, but I remember he was so delighted with her "*Spoiled Child*" and other parts, that they were frequently repeated. After being there a month or six weeks, I was one morning at my lodgings writing, during my breakfast, when a pretty loud knock at the front door announced the approach of some person: I heard myself inquired after, and I called out "show the gentleman in." I met him as he came forward—placed a chair for him and requested him to be seated. He sat down and began by asking about the health of Mrs. Lee? I told him she was pretty well but not yet down stairs, as she was rather fatigued with her performance the preceding evening:—"Ay, said he that is the very business I am come upon, some ladies (he did not say what ladies) have been so delighted with her performing that they chide themselves for being perhaps in some degree the cause of her too powerful exertions. In fact they have observed her cough some times, and they are apprehensive that her endeavours to please them when they applaud her, may be the means of her exerting herself beyond her strength: they hope she will not do that, and they also request that she will permit a medical gentleman that they will recommend, to call upon her. I replied I was infinitely obliged to the ladies, and that I was sure Mrs. Lee would follow any advice that was likely to be of service.

In a few hours after a medical gentleman called to see Mrs. Lee; he told us he had received instructions from Gloucester House to visit her, and to make a

report of the state of her health, as soon as he could ascertain the nature of her complaint. He attended her daily for about a week, and of course made his report accordingly. I was now informed that the gentleman who had in the first instance called upon me, was Sir Henry Calthorpe, since Lord Calthorpe: that the Princesses all felt interested about the state of Mrs. Lee's health: he mentioned particularly the Princess Elizabeth. They were anxious that Mrs. Lee should withdraw awhile from the fatigue of her profession, and place herself under the care of a female in Gloucestershire, who had gained great celebrity by curing many persons in the first approaches of pulmonary complaints, which they feared was likely to be the case with Mrs. Lee. I was further told that I need not to be under any apprehension as to the money necessary for the purpose, as the proper supplies would be readily furnished. I of course expressed my best thanks for their most kind and truly benevolent intentions; that we should both be glad to listen to any advice that could be pointed out for the benefit of her health; but I was afraid that withdrawing Mrs. Lee from the Theatre at that moment, might injure the manager, Mr. Hughes, as he expected her to continue during the rest of the season. The reply to this was, that Mr. Hughes had already been spoken to, and was prevailed on to consent. I immediately withdrew all my scruples on the subject. In the course of a day or two, I was again honored with a call by Lord Calthorpe, who gave directions for Mrs. Lee to proceed as soon as she conveniently could, to Windmill Hill, near Sodbury, in

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Gloucestershire, that she would there place herself in the house and under the care of a Mrs. Walker, who had obtained a great reputation in restoring to health scores of persons afflicted with weak and delicate constitutions. He hoped Mrs. Lee would soon reap benefit from the change of air, and Mrs. Walker's advice; he trusted that he should have letters from her to that effect, and he should be happy at all times to render her any service in his power, and he was certain that the Princesses and all their friends who had kindly interested themselves on this occasion, would feel great satisfaction to hear of her complete recovery. In saying this he put a purse into my hands and took his leave with the most flattering tokens of respect, requesting that when the contents of the purse were exhausted one of us would write again, and a further supply should be provided. In the course of a day or two, Mrs. Lee with our son Herbert (then a child) and a female servant, left Weymouth for Gloucestershire; whilst I, at the request of the manager Mr. Hughes agreed to stop till he could better spare me.

As soon as his lordship had left us, I very naturally felt a curiosity to examine the purse: It contained, if my memory does not deceive me, about eighty guineas. Good old fashioned, golden guineas! none of your meagre mixed-metal stuff termed sovereigns, with something like what is spoken of in the Revelations, impressed upon them. I mean something like death on a pale horse, treading on a spider or a dead grass hopper! These pieces of coin so unlike old fashioned guineas when mixed in the pocket with their

cater cousins, the modern rough shillings, feel so much alike, that they are often mistaken one for the other. If such unlucky mistakes only happened in the family of the Master of the Mint, who first sent them into circulation, much mischief would not be done; but tis a pity that any plain honest people should ever suffer mistakes of this kind.

Till then guineas were as good if not better than those known in "the golden days of good Queen Bess!" The very feel of them inspired the mind with felicitous fancies—conveyed *wit* to the finger's ends! the moment the coin touched the palm of the hand, you felt the impression of the full fat face,—the honest head—and almost every hair of the Brown George Wig that adorned it!

The period I now speak of was before paper perverted the proper feeling in money matters; and while Brown George Wigs, and Queen Bess's Golden Whigism were nearly as current as the coin of the country! and so they may be again; or something else equally beneficial to society. 'Tis in the nature of things: every evil works its own cure. Let any man of observation look back for a few years; however he may at times have been distressed at the perverse opinions of certain men, and the prevalence of error and prejudice, yet, waiting with philosophic patience, he will find

> That *Error* wider spread more surely fails,
> And *Truth*, immortal *Truth*, at last prevails!

'Tis certainly one of the greatest consolations an honest man can feel, to find that after the expiration of months,

years, and after strong and repeated struggles in the advocacy of his own well-weighed and most decided opinions: 'Tis, I say, a grateful consolation to have those opinions confirmed by the wise and good, then put into practical circulation, and at length acted upon, by all those who are most instrumental in giving Law and Custom to society.

Having wandered from my narrative further than intended, I will now return to Mrs. Lee, at Mrs. Walker's, on Wind-mill Hill, near Sodbury; where she had placed herself. She wrote me frequent and flattering accounts how she was daily improving in health and spirits: these reports I was to make to the doctor at Weymouth, whose business it was to carry them to Gloucester Lodge, where the utmost anxiety still continued to prevail on the subject. At the expiration of about a month, I received from Mrs. Lee a most alarming letter, that she was taken very ill indeed, and that I must come to her as soon as possible.

Imagine me on the road, and at Sodbury. I lose no time in ascending Wind-mill Hill; and soon found that Mrs. Lee had left the house of the doctress, (Mrs. Walker) and was at a neat cottage in the neighbourhood. I was soon given to understand that my wife had been nearly killed by the old lady's most infallible medicine. Its ingredients were of a nature totally opposite to the case, and complaints under which she suffered: for this celebrated doctress had aimed at something like working a miracle! She declared to her neighbours, that they well knew she had cured scores of fine ladies in two or three months; but now,

Mrs. Lee coming so highly recommended, not only from the nobility, but even from the Royal Family. She therefore was resolved to perform the cure even in one month, if any-wise possible. Nay, the old lady was so sanguine, that she seemed at times to talk as if she soon expected to be sent for to London to physic the King and Queen, the Court, and both Houses of Parliament! Nay, even to restore to full health and vigour all the crazy constitutions of the country.

I was anxious to see this wonderful medicine; it was shown to me: I remember saying—It looked like a mixture of muddy water and Cow-dung! but they could not prevail on me to taste it. When Mrs. Lee complained to the old doctress of its being nasty! The reply was—"The nastier the better Ma'am! 'Tis the more likely to do you good!"—"But 'tis so very strong!"—"To be sure; I have made it strong in order to cure you the sooner! what chance of doing you good, if I had made it as weak as water-gruel?" Thus the old lady went on, with arguments almost as powerful as her medicine! which she administered in such liberal doses, and so often repeated, that her patient was dangerously ill, and certainly could not have lived twenty-four hours longer had not other medical advice been called in. This was the gentleman before alluded to, Mr. Wyat, a surgeon and apothecary of Sodbury, a very intelligent pleasant man, who, as before observed, had taken convenient apartments for her, in a healthy situation near at hand. It was at this cottage I found her in pretty good spirits, but still very weak from the effects of the kill or cure

medical stuff, that had been so profusely given her. Mr. W. laughed at the old doctress having obtained so much credit among people of fashion, who ought to have been better informed on such subjects. He jokingly observed, that this was not the first patient, by many, that he had rescued from the effects of the old woman's powerful medicine. "I begin (said he, smiling at the same time) to be afraid of being thought an accomplice—going hand in hand with this old lady in business, and regularly sharing the profits between us! She first making people ill, then getting me called in to cure them! Thus he would frequently make us laugh; and laughing (when a patient is in a convalescent state) often does more good than medicine. Mr. W. was accustomed too, to tell us many jokes and adventures that occurred while he walked the Hospitals in London. In short, he was a very clever, affable man, and a most excellent companion. It was with great regret that we parted from him. If he be still alive, I shall be happy at any time to hear from him. We received letters from our friends at Weymouth, who had so liberally interested themselves in behalf of Mrs. Lee, and they wished her to try the Bristol waters. We lost no time in complying with their wishes, and set off to that place with all convenient speed. We removed to the Wells; she daily drank the waters, and we frequently hired horses, and rode for hours on the Downs, near Clifton. She was often thrown into low spirits by the pale faces of the Invalids who paraded about the Wells; and now and then a hearse, or a coffin, would pass our window. These always made

her uneasy, and she declared she should die of *conceit* alone, if she stopped much longer in such a place! We now thought of Weymouth again, and a short "sea-voyage." Luckily, at this time, Mr. Bernard, of Covent Garden Theatre, had obtained a grant to take a company to Guernsey: as he was passing through Dorchester he saw Mr. Shatford, who informed him that we were at Bristol, and that we had intentions of shortly calling upon him, in our road to Weymouth. Mr. Bernard jumped at the idea; left a letter for me offering us the best terms the concern could afford; and that Mrs. Lee might play what she liked, and if her state of health required ease and comfort, only when she liked!

This offer was the very thing to suit us; we took a post-chaise, and set off the next day for Dorchester,—then proceeded to Weymouth;—got on board the Packet, and sailed for Guernsey. We were detained by a contrary wind at least twenty-four hours near the Island of Portland: a few days previous to this a great wreck had happened on Portland Reach, and we saw a great many boats employed in picking up dead bodies, which was very appalling!

Mr. Bernard was most highly pleased at our arrival. Having taken lodgings for himself in Guernsey, he very politely yielded them up to us, and boarded at our table till he could otherwise provide for himself.

A new scene now opened to us. The voyage—the fresh air of the Island—and the novelty of every object around us; and most particularly the pleasure every one expressed in seeing Mrs. Lee—so elevated her

spirits, that she appeared as if all at once restored to perfect health. The Theatre opened in the course of a week, and most auspiciously; we had full houses every night. In less than a fortnight Mrs. Lee became an established favorite: the boxes were well taken for every night when she was to perform, but not otherwise. This did not exactly suit us; ease and comfort were our principal considerations, and I did not wish Mrs. Lee to be made a spectacle; at least not a nightly one, so as to interfere with the chief view of restoring her to health, and keeping at a distance the approaches of the disorder we most apprehended. The Theatre was open four nights a week, and, at that time to have let her play laborious parts every night would have been wrong: I should have chided myself for suffering it to be done: on the other hand, Mr. Bernard (the manager) urged that it was of no use opening the house if she did not perform: I felt the truth of his observation, and made the following weekly arrangement with him, which was abided by. viz. That Mrs. Lee should perform any part he chose on a Monday; and (if not a very troublesome one) a Character too in some After Piece. On the other three nights, only one part each night, and the easier that character the better. The public were apprised of this arrangement, and cordially approved of it. They sympathized with her so much, that they seemed to have no wish but her's;—so as they could but see her they were satisfied: The easier the character the better; because they conceived it would require less effort, and consequently be less likely to injure her. For these reasons, The Spoiled Child, Patrick (The Poor Soldier) The Virgin Un-

masked, &c. &c. were played continually. If any thing else was advertised,—any Performer taken ill,—or any other untoward circumstance took place,—it was only to announce that Mrs. Lee would that evening appear in any one of her favorite characters, and the whole difficulty was got over;—the boxes crowded, and all parties sent home in the best of all possible spirits and good humour. The resident Governor of the Island (at the time I speak of) was General Small: a fine old gentleman; a Scotchman: I believe he was well known, and highly respected by the Duke of Clarence, his present most gracious majesty, William IV. Indeed no person could know General Small, not only respect, but would esteem him: a more benevolent hearted man never lived;—so easy, so affable, so perfectly a gentleman. Politeness in him did not seem the work of art, or even the effort of good breeding: no; it appeared the natural offspring of pure urbanity, where no effort was required: but the heart dictated every word that was spoken,—grace accompanied each action,—while real blessedness of good humour and happy disposition, made every one around him happy.

We took apartments a little way out of town, for the benefit of the air, or rather for the purpose of tranquillity; for there was no want of pure and free air in a small Island like Guernsey. The Governor very often sent his servant with horses, for us to ride to different places for the purpose of exercise or amusement.

Thus we went on very pleasantly and prosperously. Benefits commenced: by way of compliment Mrs. Lee's

was the first: as soon as announced the boxes were all taken. It was the greatest house that had at that time ever been known in Guernsey; the pit was all laid out into boxes; and the Governor and his party gave up their seats in front in order to accommodate, and sat in chairs against the stage doors. Between the acts of the Farce, he came to me, and complained of being very unwell: he drank a little brandy and water, desired his servant to be sent for, bade us good night, and left the Theatre before the conclusion of the Performances.

I mention these particulars because we never saw him more. His disorder was of a very dangerous kind, it took a fatal turn and he died in the course of a few days: we were told that he spoke of Mrs. Lee with the greatest respect even at his last moments: He had made her many elegant presents during the season: several nights we were patronized by him and his friends. He had been desirous of seeing Mrs. Lee in the tragedy of Young Norval, in Douglas, and it was performed under his patronage, several times. On this account he had presented to her some very handsome dresses. The first a Scotch Plaid, for the "Shepherd Norval;" and the second was an elegant Regimental Dress, lined with silk, and richly ornamented with gold epalets, &c. &c. His most remarkable request, and nearly his last words, while alluding to his approaching dissolution, (which he felt certain was about to take place) he desired that as his Scotch Cap and Feathers, with his Plaid Sash, and Military Sword, and other accoutrements would probably be wanted to lay on his coffin, during the ceremony of the funeral; he wished them

to be presented afterwards to Mrs. Lee, as a token of his esteem for her private worth and great public talent.

These commands were fully obeyed, and the whole of the gifts were, by us, most highly valued.

For some time after the death of the Governor, the whole Island appeared (to us at least) gloomy and uncomfortable: but, by way of changing the scene, from melancholy to somewhat a little mirthful, I will now relate an anecdote which I beg leave to denominate, "A Short *Rain*, and a Merry one!" or, "Love under an Umbrella!"

One day after rehearsal, as we stood at the Theatre door, our servant girl brought us two umbrellas, saying she thought it likely to rain, and informed us that dinner was quite ready: I gave one of the umbrellas to Mr. Bernard, and added, "Come will you dine with us?" He replied—"As the shower of rain is coming on, I'll just see Miss Barry home, and be with you in five minutes." He was so: at most in less than ten minutes. He returned—knocked at the door rather sharply—and entered our apartment in high spirits: his remarkably black eyes sparkled with joy! he spoke rapturously and looked unutterable things!! What's the matter, (said I)—"Oh, nothing; (he replied) only it is all settled!"—Settled!—"Oh, damn it, I know you'll laugh at me; so I won't tell you till to-morrow, and then you may laugh at me as much as you like!" I could not even guess what this mighty good joke was; but, as it was to be given me the next day, I patiently waited its arrival.

About breakfast time, the following morning, a smart

tap at our sitting-room door (similar to the one the previous day) arrested our attention, and in popped Mr. Bernard, with—"Give me leave to introduce to you Mrs. Bernard!!" We stared, of course! "Nay laugh if you like," (said he) "I told you yesterday, that to day you might laugh at me as long as you pleased!" I observed that nobody liked a good joke better than I did; and if this was meant as a joke, I would join in any laugh it might produce; but if it was a real fact, I heartily wished them joy. The case turned out as represented; no joke, unless we admit the phraseology of the Irishman, who styled marriage a "Joke in earnest." We will now turn back to the short shower of rain, where we left Mr. Bernard and Miss Barry under an umbrella: we afterwards understood that their conversation took a turn to this effect: he began—"Well, I am going to dine with Mr. Lee and his wife, and yet their happiness only serves to put me in mind of my own forlorn solitary situation. A single man has no society to cheer him! nothing like comfort to console him. Aye, (said she) you have been married once, and must feel hurt at not receiving those flattering marks of attention you have been accustomed to; those daily tokens of esteem—those consoling affectionate regards—that—" "True; (said he) But—" "But what?" "Why"—"Ay, why indeed? —why don't you get married again!" "Perhaps nobody would have me!" "Oh, (replied Miss) there cannot be much doubt of that; why don't you try?" "What, an old man like me!" "Old! Lord! (said the fair lady) do you call yourself old? I am sure you

don't look so!—I said to my sister the other night, that, when dressed, you looked nearly as young, and much more the gentleman, than any one in the company." "Indeed! did you say so? I thank you for your good opinion, but if I were to ask you the question, what would you then say?" "What question?" after a short pause he looked her in the face—sighed and said—"Will you marry me?" "Lord! dear me! (said Miss) I don't know what I should say till I am tried." "Well then I'll try you now: Will you marry me to morrow morning?" "Bless me! (she replied) I declare you quite flurry me! I did not expect such a question, and am not prepared to give you a proper, positive answer directly, but if you'll only let me consider of it till to-morrow morning,—I think,—yes, I positively think, and absolutely promise, to consent to whatever honourable terms you may propose to me." Saying this, they shook hands; the shower was over and the love-scene ended.

Here, perhaps, a plain English common-place reader may be a little surprised, and wonder how a marriage can be manufactured in so short a time, as was the case here. For the benefit of sighing swains,—impatient love-sick young ladies,—despairing dames,—widows turned thirty,—and hesitating widowers upwards of forty, I will speak of some few of the prevailing customs of the country. When I first went to the Island, I was pleased with the lively looks, smirking smiles, and pretty faces, of many merry young maidens, that were continually skipping around us: I was no less pleased with their delightful dialect, their agree-

able prattle, something between French and English. Then to speak to them—"Oh, my good Monsieur, you must no speak-a to me! "No! why not?" "What will Madame your wife say?" "Oh! nothing: surely there is no harm in speaking to you!" "Oh, fie, you are I fear, one bad-a man; and I shall be taught-a de bad young womans, if I stay talk-a vid de marry man, like you: now I am flounced (exclaimed I) what is being flounced? do you mean the flounces on your petticoats? "Oh, my good! no, Monsieur: I mean dat I am, vat you call engage to anoder!"

I soon discovered that being "flounced" was, in Guernsey, thought equal to a marriage promise in England; and that their legislators, who compose the Royal Court, consider it equally binding.

So much for young ladies being "flounced!" which I was told consisted in the promise of wedlock, and a formal exchange of some trifling presents before friends, and witnessed by the parents and elders of both families. Now, as the ceremony of flouncing is very simple, equally so is that lawful, (and in some cases) that most astounding, heart-palpitating ceremony, of marriage!!

As I was instructed by some good old ladies, learned in the law, the first thing to be done in order to be married, was to send for the sexton of the parish; (by the bye, if you met or went to him yourself, you saved at least three-pence. I once saw a regular bill made out of the whole expences of the marriage ceremony. As I thought it very reasonable, I took a copy of it, and here it is.

	s.	d.
Sending for the Sexton	0	6
Parson's Fee (his blessing into the bargain) ..	2	6
Clerk for saying amen, &c.	1	2
Gin for ditto	0	4
Rum and brandy for bell-ringers, and other necessary expences	3	0
Total	7	6

Now can any thing be more reasonable? I am sure the most economical cold-blooded lovers that ever sighed in silent groves, or moaned by moonlight, never could grumble at or be deterred from marriage one moment, when the job can be done at so reasonable a rate. I hope to be thanked by all impatient young swains, and love-sick ladies, for the information I have here given. They will see at once how unnecessary is the expence and fatigue of a long journey to Scotland: to say nothing of the killing of half a dozen or a dozen post-horses, by bribing the post boys to whip them on beyond their strength. To be sure in this case love is the principal spur; but it is a pity that love and cruelty should be so closely united. Now all candidates for wedlock of the description here alluded to; more especially those who reside in or near the West of England; will perceive immediately, how preferable Guernsey is to Gretna Green! As for a little sea sickness during the short voyage that is nothing; nay, 'tis rather an advantage. The little assiduities and attentions that may be necessary from the commencement of the first qualms that may be felt, and the violent

agitations continued through the whole crisis of sea-sickness: these I repeat are rather a recommendation than a draw-back to the expedition. These fits, let me call them, clear the head, give a freer circulation to the blood, and of course produce higher spirits and much quicker palpitations of the heart; and to set the heart to work on such occasions, is a consideration of some value. Besides, it gives exercise to those various sensations, feelings and anxieties that will naturally be called into action as soon as the marriage ceremony has taken place; not only during the honey-moon, but probably for a long period afterwards.

As far as respects Mr. Bernard, and his "All for Love; or the world well lost," suffice it to say that he took a cottage in the island, intending to make it a summer place of entertainment, in the way of a tea garden, with singing, &c.; but the scheme it is to be feared did not answer his expectations, for he soon afterwards left the Island and sailed for America.

Having already spoken of Guernsey and Jersey, we returned after the lapse of more than a year to London. During our second season at Covent Garden, Mrs. Lee had many first-rate characters given her; some written purposely for her, as well as many songs: but on account of her weak state of health, she was obliged to decline the performance of some of them. Mr. Harris, the manager, was very liberal and indulgent; so was Mr. Lewis: I think it impossible for so large a concern as Covent Garden, to be better conducted than it was at that time. Great changes have since taken place. Mrs. Lee was more seriously ill by the latter end of

January: we removed to Kentish Town for the benefit of the air: some flattering symptoms of improvement appeared, but on the first of March she died. Previous to this we had both engaged with Mr. Macready to go to Birmingham for the summer; when the time came I went by myself: I was well received and handsomely treated, both by the manager and the audience: Mr. Macready was a very good conductor of a Theatre; a little too fond of bustle, and Pantomime perhaps; but he had a great deal of industry, and on the whole, was a worthy, clever man. I was with him two seasons at Birmingham; my son, Herbert Lee, was afterwards with him at Bristol, and played a great deal of the leading business. I corresponded with Mr. Macready, and we remained on friendly terms till his death.

From Birmingham I went to Woolverhampton, Worcester and Cheltenham. The managers were Mr. Watson and Mr. Hey; the latter was not manager many years, and I never heard of any one lamenting his leaving the profession. Mr. Watson was quite a different sort of character: he had been manager at Cheltenham and other towns, many years; nobody knew more of the eccentricities of the profession than he did: in the early part of his life he was well acquainted with Mr. John Kemble, and many eccentric and truly humorous stories are told of them.

Mr. Watson was, in every sense of the word, a man of the world, and a very clever manager; cautious to a fault: but he had a great deal of candour about him, when he found people worthy of being so treated. To persons who acted with duplicity he was always a

match, but those who meant rightly and so conducted themselves, he was not behind hand in fair dealing. This was my opinion of him when we parted, and I cannot but say, that I liked him better than many others, who, with more specious pretence about them, had much less fairness and liberality. Mr. Watson and I in the way of business occasionally corresponded.

But to return to my narrative.

While I was at Woolverhampton, I occasionally used to meditate among the tombs in the church-yard: especially over the grave of Mr. Whitely, the manager who is spoken of in another place. He was buried in or near this church porch; and if I forget not, lies without a stone or inscription to his memory. This is to be lamented, because he was certainly a man of original talent; many droll jokes and whimsical incidents that have delighted the public in modern dramas, had their origin in the facetious brain of this eccentric man. Had London been the circle in which he moved instead of the Country, he would have made some figure in dramatic history. He subscribed himself James Augustus Whitely.

During the winter I had kept up a correspondence with Mr. Macready, and returned to Birmingham in June, which was earlier than the Theatre had usually opened. We began with great eclat, and had a very good season. As to business, I had more and better than I wished for: the former season I generally played old characters, but this year I chiefly played young ones, and I was well thought of by both the manager and the audience. But I was soon called away, sooner than I expected.

Before my second season at Birmingham was quite over, I agreed with Mr. Harper for his Theatrical property at Barnstaple and other places: I was to take possession on or before the twenty-fourth of September. I put things in train as well as I could by letter, and travelled from Birmingham west-ward for Wells, Bridgwater, and Taunton: I arranged all that was necessary in those towns, and set off for Poole in Dorset. I took the Theatre there for the next season.* I went on to Weymouth, and spoke to Mr. James Biggs, and two or three other performers that I knew: I then sailed for Guernsey. The Royal Court granted me a licence to perform in this Island during the next winter: I then sailed for Plymouth; transacted business there, and took a chaise for Barnstaple about upwards of sixty miles: I commenced management the day after I reached the spot. This was all done in less than three weeks from the time I left Birmingham.

* The Theatre at this time was the Property of Joseph Garland, Esq. (Brother to one of the Members for Poole) The next season I took my Company there; and paid Mr. J. Garland a full year's rent, though I was there only about three months:—I also paid him the rent for the year that was past, (left due by the former manager): I mention this, because only two years ago since the present moment he appeared to have forgot that he ever had any dealings with me. Now if I had owed him money he would not have forgot it; he most likely would have readily remembered it; but, 'tis a common thing with many money-getting men, they appear at times as if they had lost the better half of their memories. I do not mention this with the least intention of insinuating any thing derogatory to the character of the gentleman in question. He is doubtless a very honorable man: I make the remark *philosophically*, to prove what has been before advanced; that, at a certain age our memories get more and more imperfect and uncertain.

We got up the "Castle Spectre" and some other pieces, in a style to please the public, and had a very successful season. I journied over to two or three towns, Bideford, &c. merely to put matters in train for another year; and before I quitted Barnstaple, I purchased the Theatre. About the twentieth of November I hired a vessel, at Brixham, and took the whole of my Company to Guernsey. We had a very rough passage: it being supposed that we should not be many hours going over, the necessary articles were scantily provided. Whereas we were two whole days and two nights. Some of the Company were very much frightened,—very sick, and greatly distressed, the weather being very boisterous and foul. The second night we had only one small piece of candle left; the Captain was obliged to strike a light pretty often to look at the compass, and that done, put the candle out in order to preserve it till the voyage was ended. We were certainly in great danger: there is a very perilous rock, called "The Russell." At high water this rock is, at times, covered by the tide, and mariners much fear it. A winter scarcely passes without vessels being injured by this rock. We had the good luck, however, to escape it: but paragraphs got into some of the newspapers that we were all lost. We arrived safely at last into Guernsey Pier: some of my ladies very much frightened, but all alive and well. We opened the following week, and stopped there the whole winter: I had the best season that had ever been known there at that time; but I lost a Hundred Pounds of the profits by a confounded Bank stopping payment. These Gentlemen

Bankers called themselves Messrs. Merrick & Hoskins. What is worse, I lost another Hundred Pounds some time afterwards in trying to recover money thus lost. This was my first attempt at law, and it has made me so very cautious as to dread law ever since.

Before my Company left Guernsey, I made two short voyages: one (about seven leagues) to Jersey; the other (somewhat less) to Alderney: the latter is in my opinion a most unpleasant place to reside at, especially during winter. When you arrive there it is some trouble before you get on shore, and still more troublesome to get again on board, when you leave the place.

On quitting these Islands I sailed for Lyme; made a short season at Bridport, and afterwards at Lyme until September, when I went for the second time to Barnstaple: from thence I removed to Poole, and performed occasionally at Wimborne. During these periods, I made another voyage (myself) to Guernsey and frequent journies to Taunton, where I was building a new Theatre. Until this Theatre was finished, I travelled a great number of miles in order to give the necessary directions to the workmen, and I opened in Taunton at the Spring Assizes: after that I went again for a short time to Bridport, and then to Bridgwater. I have purposely hurried over all these removals to account for my time. During my season at Bridgwater, in the middle of August (as soon as the assizes were over) I made a journey on horse-back through Stowey, down into Devonshire, as close as I could possibly travel by the side of the Bristol Channel: when I got

to Ilfracombe I went direct to Barnstaple, and returned by another road over a part of the Forest of Exmoor! Both rides westward and back again, constituted one of the most pleasing journies of the kind, that I ever undertook. For variety of prospect, romantic hills, and pleasant valleys, nothing can excel the charms it presents to an admirer of nature, or an intelligent inquiring traveller. Nothing, even in Switzerland or Italy, can be more captivating than the wild, bold, noble, extensive and truly interesting scenes, views and objects, which are perpetually arising in rapid succession to the gratification of all men of true taste.

On returning to Bridgwater, I was informed that a great many parties of first-rate fashionable people, were assembled at Tenby in Wales, and that the town had become quite popular as a Watering Place. As a Merchant Vessel was just about sailing, I resolved on going there to give it a trial for a few weeks, previous to my usual visit to the North of Devon. No time was lost in getting my Company on board the said vessel, and we sailed directly for Wales.

On arriving at Tenby, I found the town, as described, full of company: and I got a Theatre neatly prepared with all possible expedition. The Performances were well received, and the concern met with all the encouragement that could possibly be expected. I must not omit the mention of a circumstance which greatly contributed to the success we met with: my friend Shatford, already spoken of, had some few years before experienced the honor of being known to the Marquis of Lansdowne, who happened to be then at Tenby: I

took a letter with me from Mr. Shatford, addressed to the noble Marquis. I mention this circumstance because it is truly honorable to the memory of that enlightened nobleman, as well as complimentary to Mr. Shatford and myself. I caused the said letter to be delivered to his Lordship as soon as I got to Tenby: the Marquis was from home, and there I thought the matter would drop: judge how agreeably surprised I was, when, on the third day, I received an invitation from the Marquis to breakfast with him the following morning: I of course accepted the invitation, and did myself the honor of attending. Had I been a nobleman, introduced by a Prince, I could not have been more obligingly received, nor more graciously, nay, confidentially, discoursed with. All the friends of the Marquis, and those who had the pleasure of best knowing him, were at all times ready to attest that he was one of the best bred men in England. Even his enemies, (his political ones; he could not possibly have any other) all were convinced that his talents and general information excelled those of most of his contemporaries, at the time he was in office, and held so conspicuous a situation in the administration of the affairs of the Country, at the close of the American war. The present Marquis (then Lord Henry Petty) was just returned from Ireland: I was with his father when he arrived in Tenby—it was my second or third interview: there were generally two or three ladies present—one I understood to be the Honorable Miss Vernon, and the other the sister of that Right Honorable, and truly excellent patriot, Charles James Fox!—I hope it is pardonable

if I confess myself not a little proud of being in such illustrious company.

No person ever lived perhaps who had a greater or better correspondence than the noble Marquis here spoken of: he had frequent letters from all parts of the globe; and by way of giving me early information of public matters he would frequently tell me of battles, &c. before announced in the public newspapers. He sometimes showed or read to me detached passages from foreign letters, from Holland, Germany, and Switzerland, where parts of the French army then were: and many interesting accounts noticed in letters from such persons as Doctor Priestly and other learned men;—as well as from great political characters—the American President, &c. &c.

I very soon discovered the Marquis did every thing in his power to promote my interests, by speaking of me in the most handsome manner in all the circles he visited, which were, of course, of the first rank and consequence. He very politely told me, that he was obliged to make it a rule of going home early at night, on account of his age and infirmities, therefore he could not attend any public places so often as he could wish; but if his name and patronage would be instrumental to my success, I might make whatever use I pleased of them, at any time, and as frequently as I thought proper: and, he obligingly added, "on such occasions, when you announce my name, I will certainly attend, and bring those ladies with me: but should I leave before the end of the entertainments, you will, I hope, apologize for me, to your performers, who are, as I'm

informed, very clever; but please to inform them of the necessity of my keeping good hours."

Thus would this truly liberal and benevolent nobleman express himself in behalf of those persons he deemed worthy of his patronage.

In consequence of my being thus zealously patronized by this distinguished—this truly noble-minded and highly talented personage, I was invited by some of the first inhabitants of Pembroke and Haverford West, to visit those Towns with my Company; but circumstances prevented me, and we set sail for Devonshire; where we passed the winter and the following spring.

We stopped a short time where we first landed, at Ilfracombe: then we removed to Bideford, next to Torrington, then to Oakhampton, (during the time of an Election,) then to Tavistock; whilst there I performed one night at Plymouth: Mr. Cooke played "Richard;" on the same evening, the farce was the "Review," and at the manager, (Mr. Foote's) request I played "Caleb Quotem," and was, for the first time, announced as the author of it.

After finishing our season at Tavistock, I returned in the middle of September to Barnstaple, and commenced there very prosperously.

At the period of Lord Nelson's Victory over the French Fleet at the Mouth of the Nile, I was with my Company at Barnstaple, when the news arrived. In consequence we immediately brought forward a Naval Spectacle, which was performed several nights, prefaced by the following poetic effusion, called

NELSON'S GLORY.

With anxious joy and intermingled grief
The Muse would offer sympathy relief:
No British heart but glows when worth's revered;
Nelson we mourn, the man the foe most feared!
To do him honor all the Brave unite,
Britons know how to feel as well as fight!

As when the sun darts forth his noon-tide ray,
And drizzling clouds hang o'er the face of day,
The Rainbow's radiance spreads a lustre round,
While trickling drops fall copious on the ground!

So the horizon of Old England shews,
Strong rays of light gleam thro' a cloud of woes.
Great Nelson's victory gladdens all the spheres,
But, like heaven's bow, tis seen midst showers of tears.

Still let us check the rising flood of grief;
To feeling hearts tis surely some relief,
To think that ere the gallant hero died,
He knew success was to the battle tied,

And felt, tho' doom'd to suffer nature's laws,
His native land would prosper by the cause ;
Attaining thus, the object of his strife,
Soften'd were all the pangs of parting life.
To minds ennobled thus, grim Death has charms,
For Heroes wish to die in Victory's arms !

But here we pause—nor longer weep in vain,—
Chang'd be the measure, chang'd the tuneful strain.

See Neptune, Ocean's God, with joy elate,
In valiant Nelson's praise victorious rise,
While griev'd Britannia mourns the Hero's fate,
And Fame resounds his deeds through distant skies.

The British Lion, when he's rous'd afar
Sheds havoc, death and slaughter from his mane,
But as he's fierce and terrible in War,
In Peace 'tis lamb-like mildness marks his reign !

Bright Hope anticipates the day at hand,
When crowding round Britannia's happy Strand,
Great Commerce with her thousand sails unfurl'd,
Shall waft her gifts to every Coast,
The dreadful cry of War be lost,
And Friendship, Peace and Plenty, bless the world !

Soon after this I was warmly patronized by several Lodges of Freemasons at the different towns I visited, which induced me to compose the following

MASONIC ODE.

Some times sung to the Chorus tune of "Anacreon in Heaven."

When Faith left her mansion celestial for earth,
On Seraphim plumes she was borne thro' the sky:
The Crown o'er her temples betokened her birth,
The Gem on her bosom behests from on high.
Gliding softly through clouds by irradianny cleared,
Sweet Hope with a smile like an Angel appeared,
As friends they approached, interchanging the sign,
On Earth thus cementing a union divine.

To join this lov'd pair, while discoursing below,
Mild Charity came their associate and guide;
All the blessings of life 'twas resolved they'd bestow,
Where honor, with Virtue & Truth, should preside.
This world Faith supported—Hope promised another,
While Charity bound man to man as his brother;
By signs, words, and tokens, the system began—
The eye of the Deity sanctioned the plan.

An abode free from guile these fair strangers now sought,
Where Folly with footstep unhallowed ne'er trod,
Where Wisdom held converse—Morality taught,
And Man paid true homage to Virtue and God.

Despairing they droop'd, long in darkness astray,
Till a light, like the Star in the East, led the way!
They entered the Lodge—all their wishes were crown'd!
Here Faith, Hope, and Charity, ever are found!

O'er Masons presiding, these Virtues combine—
Faith beckons to join the Grand Master above;
Hope points through Heaven's Arch to the regions divine,
And Charity teaches peace, friendship and love!
To all who deserve be these principles shown,
The Craft is most honor'd when most it is known;
May Truths' sacred records to man be unfurl'd,
And Faith, Hope, and Charity, govern the world.

END OF VOL. I.

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